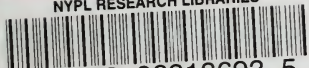


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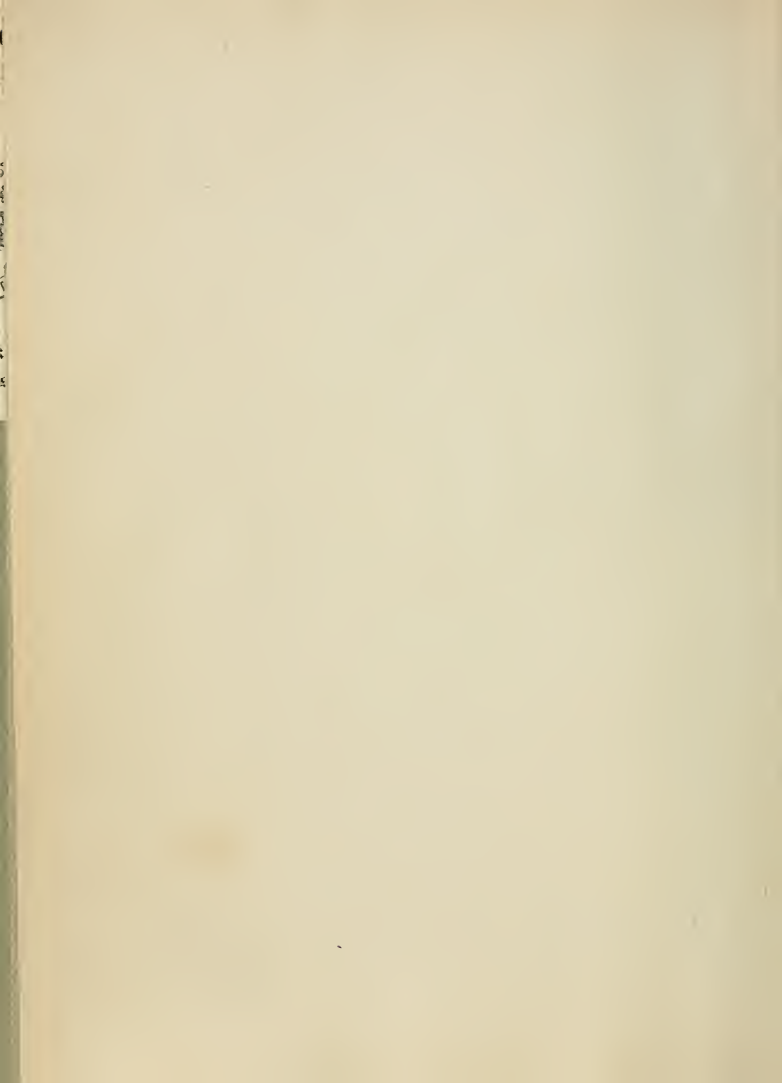
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THE BLACK AUNT.

STORIES AND LEGENDS FOR CHILDREN.

WITH WOOD CUTS AFTER DESIGNS

BY

LEWIS RICHTER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

CHARLES A. DANA

NEW-YORK

RUDOLPH GARRIGUE

ASTOR HOUSE, BARCLAY ST.

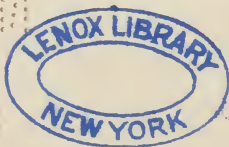
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THE INKSTAND.

There lived once a good old lady, whom all the children called AUNT, and because she had black hair and always wore a black dress they called her the **BLACK AUNT**. The **BLACK AUNT** loved the children very dearly; and they were much attached to her, for she was always kind to them, and knew how to play charming plays with them, and to tell all sorts of stories which the little people were never tired of hearing. One morning the AUNT woke up early, — it was her birthday morning, — and saw a beautiful

inkstand on the table at her bedside. It was richly painted and ornamented with variegated flowers and little gold flourishes so that it was a pleasure only to look at it. When the AUNT got up she asked every body in the house who it was that had made her a present of the inkstand. But not a soul knew anything about it, and all wondered how it had got to the AUNT's bedside. Nevertheless the inkstand was there, and the AUNT was very much pleased with it, and carried it to her writing desk. Then she put a chair before the table and leaned her arm upon it with her head resting on her hand, and a great many thoughts went through her mind. She thought that now she was growing old, and might soon die, and then the children would no longer have their AUNT to play with them and tell them stories. She remembered too that they would soon come to wish her happiness on her birthday, and that then they would wish to hear one of her stories, and that she did not know what one she should tell them. They already knew by heart the story of NAUGHTY CHARLES, of GOODNATURED LOTTIE, of DAINTY FRED, of GENTLE ANNIE, of the BAD CONSEQUENCES OF LAZINESS for they had read them very often in their picture books.

The good AUNT thought a long while, but she could not think of any thing new. Then she leaned back in her armchair and looked thoughtfully at the new inkstand. As

she looked she saw the stopple slowly raised up and a black little mannikin peeping out, and the variegated stopple with the little golden button at the top sat like a hat on his little head.

The mannikin at first looked timidly around and made all sorts of queer faces; but pretty soon he began to tell stories about birds and flowers, and about knights and elves, and while he was speaking the AUNT believed that she saw all that he was telling about. It seemed to her as if the flowers were growing up out of the inkstand, the gold glistened clearer and clearer, the knights moved past on stately horses, and the elves danced and sung in the moonshine. The AUNT sat perfectly still and looked steadily at the inkstand and at the black mannikin as she listened to his wonderful narratives. Then a big dronefly came flying into the border of her night cap, and hung there in the lace and kicked and buzzed so that the AUNT struck at it and rubbed her eyes. But the mannikin without being frightened at all, ducked down into the inkstand, the stopple fell back into its place and so all these splendors disappeared.

The BLACK AUNT now came near getting actually black with vexation at the big drone fly which had disturbed her so at the wrong time. But she did not forget what she ought to do. She wrote down everything that

the black mannikin had told her, so that when she was gone from the earth the children might read the stories, and remember the old AUNT who used to play with them and tell them so many things. And after that day she used to sit a great many hours writing at her desk, and when all was lonely and still about her, and she could not think of a new story, if she looked at the wonderful inkstand, the black mannikin would peep up as if he had been called, and tell her one. And the stories which he told are written in this book for you, my dear little children, to read.



HOW TWO FINCHES GOT MARRIED.

 finch once flew into a handsome garden, where there were a great many pretty flowers, and green trees and shrubs. There he saw another finch sitting on a peartree, and she pleased him so much that he thought he should like to have her for a wife. And because he admired her he began to sing: «pink, pink, pink», which was as

much as to say «I love you». She understood it instantly and answered: «pink, pink, pink». At this the finch was overjoyed, and flew to the pear tree and sat on a little bough beside her. Then there was such a chattering and whispering, and they talked it all over, how they would build a nest and then get married. They did not once stop to think how they should get a living, for on the pear tree where they sat there were caterpillars and insects in abundance. As soon as they had agreed that the elder bush by the spring in the corner of the garden was the best place for a nest, one flew one way and the other, the other, to get bits of straw and feathers. So the nest was done very soon and the finches began to sing as loudly and as clear as they could. While they were singing so loudly and sweetly the other birds in the garden heard it and coming up, asked what was going on, and what made them so happy. The finches answered that their nest was ready and that they were going to be married that very day. The other birds were delighted to hear this and remained with them and began to sing also, so that it sounded far and wide and more and more birds came up, robin red breasts, linnets, nightingales and larks, green finches and blackbirds and they made an abundance of music all the day long.

When evening came, every little bird flew back home and the finches also went into their nest. Then the glowworms came out of the bushes and hedges and danced a torch dance to close the festive day, until one little light after another went out, and the little birds sat in the darkness and went right to sleep for they were fatigued.

For a great many days after it was all still in the finches' nest so that you would have thought, they had gone on a wedding tour as fashionable gentlemen and ladies do after they get married. But at last a little peeping was heard in the elder bush; the finches flew in and out in search of food for four little young birds which were stretching and turning themselves in the nest. The old ones often stayed away a good while and the little ones would begin to cry with hunger and impatience; but then the wind would stir the elder bush so that it rocked the nest and the birdies became still again.

Pretty soon the little ones got out into the sun and tucked up their feathers and plumed themselves and thought they already knew enough to get on by themselves: and at last the garden was too small for them and they flew away out of it. At this the old ones were

vexed and sorry and when the autumn wind had taken all the leaves off the elder bush they could not bear it any longer in the solitude, and flew out also into the wide world to seek their lost children. Good luck on the journey to the little birds!



LITTLE MARY.

The father and mother of little Mary were dead and a woman had taken her, who was hard and unkind to her. She made the child do hard work so that she was faint and unhappy, and often cried and wished she were with her father and mother in heaven.

In the winter little Mary often had to go out to the woods to pick up sticks of wood and if she did not bring enough into the house the bad woman would scold her very harshly and even strike her. Once when she was sent out into the woods she went along crying, for

though the winter was about over, it was cold and little Mary's frock was short and full of holes: she had not had a new one since the death of her parents. When she got into the forest she went to work industriously, collecting the dry branches and stooped for them here and there till her little arms could not hold any more. Then she started for the house and came to an open spot in the woods; there she saw a snow drop under a tree and as she was tired with walking and stooping so much she sat down by the snow drop and laid her load down beside her. As she sat there looking at the flower she said: «dear little snow drop what a pretty green dress you wear and how splendid it makes you look. You never freeze like me poor child in my ragged dress and the bad woman will never give me such a beautiful little white cap as yours.»

Saying this she laid her little head down on the bundle of sticks and began again to weep bitterly till at last she went to sleep. Then she had a dream and saw a gentle wind moving the snow drop and listened as it began softly to ring and tinkle like a bell. The other snow drops which were still asleep under the ground heard the ringing and rubbed their eyes open and stretched their limbs and came out into the daylight and opening their bells began also to ring softly with silvery



tones so that the wood was full of the strange, sweet echoes. But little Mary did not wake up again from her beautiful dream but went dreaming to her father and mother in heaven.

The next day as they went to look for her they found her dead, surrounded by blooming snow drops and the snow drops had covered her after her death with their green leaves.

THE COCKEREL AND THE HENS.

There was once a great farm yard in which there lived a splendid looking Cockerel with his wives, a whole flock of hens, black and white, grey and brown, both with and without crests. They all lived in great peace and harmony, for every thing went well with them and every day they got a large pile of barley corns for their food. Only one thing troubled them, that their eggs were always taken away and they hardly ever could bring up a brood of chickens. The hens had often hid their nests, sometimes in the woodshed, sometimes in the barn, so that the eggs might not be found, and once they had actually saved up a mountain of eggs. But the girl who fed them found their egg mountain and carried it to the city and sold it.

Indeed it was no more than natural that the eggs should be found, for as soon as a hen had laid one, she

set up such a noisy cackling that it was heard in the farthest corner of the farm yard and all the hens came running together to look at the wonder. Some boasted how white it was, others praised its beautiful shape and others disputed whether it would hatch a pullet or a cockerel. About this the hens very often fell into a quarrel so that at last there was such a chattering and cackling, that all the servant maid had to do was to go where the noise was in order to be sure of finding the eggs.

The old Cockerel was troubled at the loss of the eggs quite as much as the hens, if not more. One day after he had been walking up and down thinking, in a corner of the farm yard, he flew upon the edge of the watering trough, shut his eyes and crowed a loud and piercing Cock-a-doodle-doo. At this well known call, the hens came rushing and tumbling from all sides and formed a clucking assembly around the Cockerel. Then, although he was much agitated and troubled in his mind, he made a very strong speech to the meeting and told the hens that he knew perfectly well how often they had to mourn over the loss of their eggs, and that after long reflection he could think of no better advice than to leave the farm yard and go off into the woods. If they were willing to do this they should get up early the next day. A loud clucking announced their assent to this proposi-



tion, and all of them went rather earlier than usual to roost so that they might get a good sleep before starting. The next morning the Cockerel waked up his wives with a sort of low crowing and they started in perfect silence out of the farm yard. But as the last of the hens left the yard he flew upon the gate and crowed an exulting Cock-a-doodle-doo, and then all went on further and further till they got into the woods. There they made a great nest in a thicket for their eggs and at night they

roosted on the trees. For a while they got on pretty well, only the hens cackled so loud when they laid their eggs that once the fox heard it and came stealthily up at



night and carried off a white brood hen from her nest and smashed the eggs. For the old Cockerel this was a great affliction and after it the hens went about looking quite down hearted. And when the autumn wind shook the leaves from the trees and the hens often had to scratch all day without finding a kernel of anything to eat, they went to the Cockerel and begged him to lead them back to the farm yard. There they said it was true their eggs were taken away from them, but they had a warm roost and good food; here in the woods the fox broke their eggs and ate them up themselves into the bargain.

The Cockerel, who had himself privately begun to long for the heap of barley corns, agreed at once to go back, but advised the hens for the future to leave off cackling so as not always to betray where the eggs were. But they were not disposed to be advised by him. They said that when they cackled they did it because they knew they had done a good thing; but that he often set up his noise without any reason; at least none of them had ever seen that he had laid an egg, and so he had nothing to say about the matter. Then the Cockerel was ashamed and held his tongue and led his family back to the farm yard where they fell upon the heap of barley-corns with a very keen appetite. There they live to this very day and have the same sort of food, the same cackling and the same trouble.

PAPER, INK AND PEN.



Once a professor had paper, ink and pen on his writing table just as all professors have. A professor, my dear children, is a man to whom grown people go to school just as you children do to the schoolmaster: a man who has learned a great deal, so much, in fact, that very

often he cannot tell what he shall do with all the things he has in his head, and so forgets a great many of them: a man who has read very many books and writes almost as many as he has read, for which purpose he has need of paper, pens and ink.

Such was the professor, who was now sitting before his writing table thinking over a new book that he was going to write. He had his pen already in his hand, but it was evening, or else he was tired of work; at any rate his eyes closed and he nodded away fast asleep. Then he thought he heard a rustling and the paper began to stir and crackle and at last he heard it say very softly: «I should like to know what the professor would do without me; he could not write anything more, for I am the main thing in his books.» — «O you stupid paper» — the ink interrupted quite rudely — «how can you talk so? The black letters make the book and not the paper. It is I alone that shine on your vacant face, and that every body looks at.» — «Neither of you know much» — here gabbled the pen, seeming still to have something of the goose in it; — «it is plain to see that of us three I am the chief person. Who makes the letters but me? What fine scrawls we should see if you were to try to write alone!» — In this way the pen went on scolding louder and louder till at last the professor woke up. He found that in his sleep he had made an immense pot hook all over the paper with his pen and had borne on so hard that the pen was all split up. Besides he had gone so near to the inkstand that he had knocked it over and the ink was running from the table upon the pro-

fessor's dressing gown and from there upon the floor. This was very disagreeable to the good man for he did not like the trouble of cleaning it up. However he was



very much amused at the misfortune which had happened and wrote his book directly. The purport of the book was, that if every thing should perform its own duty the world would go on as well as it possibly could; and that all by working together might accomplish some-

thing great and noble that each by itself could not do at all.

The book was read a great deal and the paper, pen and ink seem to have taken its teachings to heart for whenever since that time the professor has gone to sleep at his work he has never heard anything like a quarrelsome word from either of them.

JOHNNY AND MAGGIE.

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Here was once a fair in a city when a great many booths were set up on the marketplace and beautiful things were sold in them, gingerbread and colored glasses, handsome clothes and rare shells, shining silver ware and all sorts of play things. Before one of the booths where toys were sold, a crowd of children were collected looking at the handsome sight. The boys wondered at the horses with splendid trappings, the glittering guns and swords: the girls looked longingly on the bright tin cooking utensils and the finely dressed dolls. But there were two beautiful dolls, Johnny and Maggie that stood beside each other on the booth counter and attracted all eyes. It was impossible to tell which of the two was the handsomer; whether it was Maggie in the pink silk dress, the little white apron, the shoes with silver spangles and the round hat on her little head cover-

ed with brown ringlets, or Johnny with the white trousers, the scarlet jacket, the little pointed hat and the yellow pointed shoes with bells on the toes. While the children were standing there gazing a gentleman came up, looked at the toys and finally bought Maggie.



The man in the booth was very polite and asked if he should send the doll home for the gentleman so that he would not have to carry it. But he said that he lived near by in the great house on the corner of the street, and could take it himself. Then he took Maggie and went immediately away. How the children looked after

him, they wanted so much to have the doll. But the gentleman carried it home and gave it to his little daughter Lizzie. She was delighted with the pretty Maggie and played all day with her. And when evening came Lizzie thought the doll must be tired and so she laid her in a pretty little bed. Now it had got almost dark and Lizzie was weary with playing so long and she took her little chair and sat down in the corner beside the warm fire place the bright flame from which flickered on the ceiling. As she sat there alone without making any noise, she thought she heard a rustling as if something was trying to jump up and reach the door latch. She kept still and listened, and at last the latch was raised, and by the light of the fire she saw a gaily dressed little fellow come in with white trowsers on, red jacket, pointed hat, yellow pointed shoes and the little bells at the toes tinkled gently at every one of the cautious steps which he made. In fact it was Johnny from the booth. He looked around every where and at last went up to Maggie's bed. Then he clapped his little hands for joy and said with a little voice: «Ah, dear Maggie, have I found you at last? If you only knew how long the time has seemed in the booth without you. Oh I wish the gentleman had taken me too so that we might not have been parted!» — «Johnny, my dear Johnny,» — Maggie softly an-

swered, «is it really you?» Come, sit down on the bed and tell me how you got here.» Then Johnny sat down on the edge of the bed looked around timidly again, and told in a low voice how he had heard and noticed that



the gentleman who had bought his dear Maggie lived in the great house on the corner of the street. Then he waited very impatiently till evening in order to steal out of the booth unnoticed when the trader went out and shut it up. But when the moment arrived, as he was about to get down from the table he fell and the bells on his shoes began to tinkle. The trader heard this and picked him up and put him on the table again, and then shut up the booth. After that he was very lonely

without Maggie, till suddenly he saw the moon shining through a great knot hole in the side of the booth. Then he climbed up very quickly to the hole and by good luck got out at it and made his way into the street. Then he stole along in the shadow of the booth till he came to the house and was overjoyed because he found the right room at once. At this Maggie took Johnny tenderly by the hand and said: «Oh you good Johnny how I wish that we could always stay with each other!»

All this Lizzie hearkened to behind the fire place and as she sat bent forward so as to see and to hear what was going on her long hair fell over her face and tickled her nose and made her sneeze aloud. Johnny was so frightened at this that he was out of the door at a bound and when Lizzie came to Maggie's bed she lay there dumb and speechless as before, and answered not a word to the questions that Lizzie asked her. The child was sorry that the doll could not speak and went to her father and told him the whole story. But he thought she had fallen asleep behind the fire place and dreamed the whole. Still Lizzie would have it that every thing had really happened, and that if Johnny would only come again, her doll would certainly speak. Accordingly the next day Lizzie's father took her with him to the market place in order to satisfy her by buying Johnny also. But the

booth was gone; the trader had packed up his toys and gone with them to the fair in some other town.

Lizzie went home in great sadness and told her doll how Johnny had gone away, but the doll heard nothing of it, or at least gave no answer and has never spoken again to this day.



THE CURIOUS COCKEREL.

here was once a curious Cockerel that always stood, listening and looking to hear and see everything that took place in the farm yard. When the hens were cackling privately to each other he would run up and hear-ken, which was often much against their wishes. Then they would say to him that he would do well not to trouble himself about business that did not concern him and that he ought to be keeping watch that the fox did not get into the farm yard and crow when a bird of prey showed himself so that they might hurry and get the chickens out of the way of harm. But the curious

Cockerel paid no attention to the advice of the hens and often was the loser by not doing so. Once as the farm yard dog was getting his dinner and the Cockerel ran up, the dog bit his leg, and once as he went into the goose pen to count the goose eggs, an old goose got angry and rushed at him and tore out the handsomest feathers of his tail. After this, the geese and the hens made a great deal of fun of him; but for all that he did not learn to behave any better.

One morning when the door of the hen roost was opened and he walked out with the hens, he heard a loud Cock - a - doodle - doo very near by. The curious Cockerel flew upon the wall of the farm yard to see where the crowing came from. He saw in the neighbouring farm yard a Cockerel scratching about for something to eat. Being exceedingly curious he flew over to him and said:

«Your servant true!

Your hens, how do they do?

How many eggs do they lay?

And does the hawk carry any away?

And those darlings of my heart,

The Chickens, are they pretty smart?»

The other Cockerel at first looked at him in astonishment, but soon grew angry and replied:

«Mr. Neighbor, that's nothing to you,
What business have you to know how they do?
Come be stirring, clear out of the yard,
Or else I fear you'll fare rather hard.»

With this he ran full tilt at the curious Cockerel and tried to hit him, but he thought it was best to fly upon the wall again. There he walked up and down in bad humor, for he was vexed because his neighbor would have nothing at all to do with him and had driven him off besides. The neighbor paid no farther attention to him, but went into a remote part of the farm yard to find something to eat. When the curious Cockerel saw him go away he thought: «Now I'll go down among the hens; they will certainly be more inclined to talk.» So he flew down and went up to the hens and said:

«Your servant, my dear Biddies,
Did you sleep well last night?»

But it seemed that the hens also would have nothing to do with him, for they did not even look at him, but kept scratching in the sand. Then he spoke again:

«The weather this morning is fine and clear,
Corn seems to be pretty plenty here.»

Still the hens made no reply, but left him where he was and went to the other side of the yard. The curious

Cockerel was now resolved to have a gossip with them and followed after and asked again:

«Have you had your breakfast already here?
Pray do they give you pretty good cheer,
Or have you noticed that corn was dear?»

This importunity and curiosity were more than one of the hens could bear and she broke out and scolded him.

«Who told you to ask about our feeding?
Mr. Cockerel you've had a poor sort of breeding.
Your speeches are not at all to my taste;
Be quick, I advise you depart from this place,
Or I'll call the dog and he'll send you off bleeding.»

When the curious Cockerel saw that he could not make out anything he kept still for a while. Then he went up to a hen standing apart from the others pluming her wings. He thought she would be more talkative and spoke to her:

«How does it go with the eggs that you lay?
The folks always try to get 'em away:
Pray have you had every one to yield?
Or have you a few somewhere concealed?
Of course you are willing to let me see,
So come to the nest, and show them to me.»

But this time the curious Cockerel had come to the wrong place for the hen rushed at him with impatience, saying:

«Whether we hide our eggs or no,
Is a thing that you have no need to know,
And if to preserve your own you care,
You'd better be keeping watch where they are,
And not be gadding about to learn
Of things with which you have no concern.»

Then an old grey hen with a great cap of feathers on her head, that had heard from a distance what the Cockerel said came up in a great passion and cried:

«Why, you impudent old busy body;
What are our eggs to you, you noddy?
If you are anxious to look at some eggs
Away to your home as fast as your legs
Can carry you off, and don't make a bother,
For eggs are the same in one place as another.»

While the curious Cockerel was standing there not knowing exactly whether to go or stay, the whole flock of hens raised such an outcry, such a scolding, and clamor at him that the other Cockerel came up from the other end of the farm yard and when he saw that the curious meddler was still there, he flew at him and hit



him some hard blows. The farm yard dog was also attracted by the noise and rushed upon the stranger so that he hardly had time to fly upon the fence, from which he flew down again to his own yard. Then his hens came up to him complaining and scolding because he had left them alone so long. It seems that while the curious Cockerel was looking after strange hens' eggs the hawk had come and stolen two chickens and the fox had stolen into the hen roost and carried off two of the handsomest hens and smashed all the eggs.

THE DEAR MOTHER IN HEAVEN.

 A man once lived with his wife and child happy and contented, for they loved each other and God had given them every thing good and necessary. In the morning the man went out to work and the child remained with her mother at home and played, and the mother told her pretty stories such as she liked to hear and caressed her tenderly; or else she went with her into the garden and the child gathered and ate the sweet strawberries and the finely flavored raspberries. And when the father came home at night they were all three happy because they were together. In this way they lived for some time till at last the mother became feeble and ill and had to go to bed. Then the father went sorrowfully to work in the morning and was more sorrowful at evening when he saw that the sufferer grew no better. But the child remained with her mother and when she was told that she might go alone to the garden she had no wish to go,

but would hide her face on her mother's bed and weep
At last the mother felt that she must die, and called the



child to her and said: «I shall soon go away from you, for our dear Father in Heaven is calling me to himself; but if you are good and kind I will come sometimes to see you, my darling, and if it is God's will take you where I am in Heaven.» Soon after the mother died and was burried in the garden and the father was very unhappy and shed tears. The child was unhappy too, and would like to have gone to heaven with her mother, but as she hoped her mother would come to see her or to take her to herself, she was soon con-

soled again. But the father was sorry for the child because she would have to be alone while he went away to work and so he married another wife to be the mother of the child. But she was a bad woman and did not love the child and did not speak to her, nor even look kindly at her. She took no care of the child nor did she wash her clothes nor mend them, and when she went to bed at night the new mother did not arrange her little bed for her. This made the child unhappy and very often she went into the garden and sat down on her mother's grave and said: «Ah, dear mother in Heaven come and take me away.» But when the bad woman saw the child sitting on the grave, she was angry and drove her away for she could not bear that the child should think of the departed one, and she saw plainly that she had no love for her second mother. And when she saw the child eating strawberries and raspberries as she had been accustomed to do when her own mother was living, she beat her severely for she would not let the child have the berries but wanted to eat them all herself. At last she became so bad to the child that she would not let her go into the garden at all, and when she went there herself she fastened the child up in a dark room. Then the child would break into loud lamentations and weep for she was afraid in the darkness. «Oh mother

Heaven,» — she said once when she was shut up here, — «Oh come and take me away.» — Then a bright light came into the dark chamber and the mother



in white robes beautiful and loving, just as she had been in life, only much more beautiful took the child on her

knee and kissed her and caressed her and told her stories just as she had used to do. But now they were stories of Heaven about the eternal gardens of paradise where imperishable flowers bloom and flourish, where heavenly sweet fruits ripen, where the angel-children play joyous plays and dance the celestial dances, and sing their hymns before the throne of God our father. The child was happy to hear this and became still and quiet and finally went to sleep. When the bad woman came from the garden and went into the chamber to fetch the child she found her all pale and asleep in one corner and woke her up with hard and unkind words.

At evening the child told her father how her mother in heaven had been to see her and what she had said to her. At this the father was thoughtful and though he told the child that it was only a dream, it made him heavy hearted for he had loved his first wife much more than the second and knew that the latter was not a good mother to his child. But as he did not know how bad she was, he was silent and said nothing about it. After that whenever the child was shut up in the dark chamber she was calm and quiet for she did not stay long alone in the darkness. Her mother in Heaven came to see her with a soft, clear light and comforted her and told her about Heaven and the Angels. Then the child

grew more and more full of longing for the heavenly delights and begged her mother at every visit to take her with her, but the mother always said it was not time yet and she must wait. And as the child grew paler and more silent and often looked out of the window towards Heaven with folded hands, the bad woman was more unkind and hard to her and fastened her up oftener in the dark chamber. Once when she had shut her up there and went to bring her out again from the darkness the child looked much paler than usual, and when she called her, did not stir. Then she saw that she was dead. The mother in Heaven had been with her and rocked her to sleep and promised her that she should wake up in Heaven. And there the child has a robe of light like the angel-children with whom she plays in the gardens of God, and they teach her to sing heavenly hymns.



CHRISTMAS EVE.

Evening had come over the earth, the sacred eve of Christmas, and a poor woman was sitting with her two children in a little room of a small house in the suburbs. The father of the children had died after having been ill for a long time during which he had earned nothing so that he had left his family in extreme poverty. The mother too was unable to earn anything for she had to stay with the youngest child and nurse it and take care of it because it was ill all the time. Now the poor mother was sitting crying to herself for she had no wood to warm the room and on that day when all others were rejoicing and parents every where

were lighting up Christmas trees *) for their children she had to sit in the darkness because the last drop of oil in the lamp was burned up. When the elder boy heard his mother sobbing he threw his arms around her neck and said: «Oh mother if we only had a light! If I could only see you! I believe I should not be so cold and you would not cry so any more if you could see us.» — At this the poor woman almost broke her heart with grief; then she put her hand in her pocket and said: — «Go my child and get some oil; here is my last penny, I meant to have bought bread with it to-morrow, but who knows but the holy Christ may give us bread in some other way.» The boy took the money and ran to

*) For the information of my little readers I will say that in Germany Christmas Eve is a great festival in every family, especially for the children. For them the parents prepare a Christmas Tree, generally a young pine, which is hung all over with gilt apples and nuts, strings of raisins and almonds and choice confectionary, all of which glitter beautifully in the light of very many small colored wax tapers which are placed among the dark twigs of the pine, while at its foot the children find their presents. They take great pleasure in gathering around the tree, admiring its beauty and dancing in their joy. As long as the tapers are burning in all their glory, and the gilt apples and sugar toys are glittering they hardly look at their beautiful presents. Of course they take great pains to please their parents all the year round, lest they should lose the benefit of a fine Christmas Tree, for only good children have a Christmas Tree.

The Translator.

get some oil, and as he went he looked to the right and left to see if there were anywhere a window illuminated with the lights of a Christmas tree. But only poor people lived in that street and most of the houses were dark; but here and there a faint oil lamp shone through a small and dim window pane.

The boy went farther and farther till he reached the broad street full of stores, all lighted up with splendor. In the tall houses there lived rich families and at the large windows Christmas trees were shining brilliantly. Finally he came to the market place where booth stood next to booth, and he could not enough wonder at all the magnificent things exposed for sale, the sweetmeats, the painted toys and the brilliant Christmas trees. He went about here and there, looked at one thing after another and was so happy that he did not feel that his hands and feet were growing numb with cold. At last he came to a booth which was lighted up more finely than any of the others and a great many people were crowded together before it; as he looked in, he forgot everything else, for there he saw all that his mother had told him so often about the holy Christ wrought finely and beautifully in wax. The Virgin Mary was sitting in a stable holding the infant Christ on her lap; and before her the shepherds were kneeling, worshipping the holy

child, and all around were cows and sheep and above the child were waxen angels with silver wings. The boy had never seen anything so beautiful and I don't know how long he would have stood gazing at it if a crowd of new comers had not pushed him aside. Then he suddenly remembered that his mother was sitting in the dark at home with his little sister and that he had come out to get some oil. But how was he frightened when he felt that the penny had fallen out of his benumbed hand. He began to weep aloud, but though the crowd around him were constantly going into the booth to buy things and carrying the beautiful articles they had bought past him as they went out, no one asked what was the matter and he remained unnoticed in his grief. — Then he went slowly back through the lighted street, but now he looked neither to the right hand nor the left for he no longer took pleasure in anything. At last he came into



the dark street where his mother lived. And as he thought how sad his mother would be about the lost penny he could not make up his mind to go home, but sat down on a great stone and wept bitterly.

«Ah», — thought he, — «the Christ-Child to-day brings gladness to all, and only leaves mother and me more unhappy than ever.» So he sat a great while till at last he heard the watchman on the corner calling the hour; he came down the street with his lantern and sung:

«In the sacred, silent night,
Christ, the Lord, came down from Heaven
Peace to us he brought, and joy
To every pious soul hath given.»

Then by the light of the lantern the boy saw something shining on the snow before him and picked it up to play with. But the watchman came up and asked why he sat there in the street in the dark and cold and did not go home. In tears the child told how he had lost his mother's last penny with which he had gone to get oil; how his mother wept all the time since his father had died and how he could not bear to see her grieve for the last penny. «Well come with me said the kindly watchman.» I will give you some oil and then you must

run home quickly, for your mother will be troubled about you. And as he took the child by the hand he felt



something hard and asked what it was. The child showed him the shining thing he had just found in the snow. «There said the watchman see what the holy Christ has sent you! That is a gold piece; for a gold piece you can get more than a handful of pennies. Now your mother can buy bread and wood to-morrow.» At this the boy was full of delight and after he had got the oil of the watchman he ran home to his mother and told

her every thing that had happened, how he had lost the penny and found the gold piece. Then the mother wept but it was for joy, and she took her children on her lap and taught them to thank the holy Christ child because he had remembered their poverty and made them so rich.

LITTLE BEE TRUNKHOSIE.



very fine summer morning the sun used to shine clear and warm on a bee house that stood in the corner of a great flower garden. Then it would become too warm for the bees in their small bed rooms and they would come out and rub their eyes and brush their wings off neatly and very quickly, all the time making a gentle hum and then they were all ready to fly away to get honey. Then a very large bee would come out. This was the queen and she used to count her subjects before they flew out, so that none should remain behind and play the idler. She called them all by name; Little bee

Sharpsting! Honeytrunk! Early up! Swiftwings! and so she would call all their names. At last one morning the little bee Trunkhosie did not answer when he was called. At this all the bees were surprised, for Trunkhosie was always an early riser and a right industrious little thing and knew how to carry a great deal of honey and wax on his pretty little feet. Now they thought he must for once have overslept himself and then they began to buzz louder and louder so as to wake him up. But Trunkhosie did not appear and the queen was very angry and said: «He shall get a punishing if he sleeps in the day time; but do you others fly away to work.» Then all the bees flew away humming gaily and it was not long before they met Trunkhosie, coming to meet them richly laden with honey and wax.» Hurrah, where do you come from so early? they cried to him, «and how industrious you have been!» Then the industrious Trunkhosie told them in great haste that late on the day before he had flown into a beautiful flower and it had closed its cup while he was busy sucking the honey from it. In this way he had been obliged to sleep all night in the flower, but as soon in the morning as the flower was open again he had made haste to fly away and on the road had gathered as much more wax and honey as he was able to carry and was now going to

take it all to the queen. When Trunkhosie had told his story he flew right away for the beehouse. There the lady queen was sitting on a beautiful throne of wax as yellow as gold, thinking of the punishment to be inflicted on the little bee for his laziness. But when she saw Trunkhosie coming in so richly laden, she made him tell her how it had happened and praised him for his industry both in the morning and evening. Then the little bee took off his waxen load with great content, and again flew far away over garden, and field and meadow to get a new one.

ANNIE AND THE ELVES.



Dear little Annie was very unhappy for her mother was sick and the people in the village said she would die. And the child sat day and night at her mother's bed side and grieved for her mother and wept a great deal. The poor woman wanted to get up out of the bed and sit out before the door in the warm sun, or under the green trees in the little garden behind the house, but she could not stir for pain and had to lie still in the narrow chamber. Once when her mother had gone to sleep Annie thought she would go out into the woods to gather a bunch of flowers to please her when

she woke up. So she went into the woods and picked the most beautiful wild flowers and was so much engaged in it that she did not perceive till it was too late that it was growing dark and that she had lost her way. She ran first in this direction, and then in that in great anguish, but constantly got deeper and deeper into the forest, and finally she could not tell which way to turn. At last she came to a little brook that flowed through the midst of the woods and sat down all weary in the grass under a tree on the bank and began to lament: «Oh if I had only staid at home! How mother will be worried about me, she will die and will never give me another kiss and I shall not see her again.»

While Annie was lamenting in this way the moon rose and the white star flowers and yellow daisies peeped out around her and the tall trees cast long dark shadows and made strange figures on every side and the child began to be alarmed in the loneliness. She nestled herself close together, wrapped her hands in her little apron and longed for the day to come so that she might find the way home. Now beside the brook where Annie was sitting there stood a great white water lily shining and glittering in the moon light, and as she was looking at the flower a little white figure rose out of its cup. The figure was not more than a span high and had a

pale but wonderfully beautiful face, so beautiful indeed that Annie thought she had never seen anything like it. The figure wore a long shining bright dress with a silver girdle and on her head was a silver crown. She stood up a little while in the lily cup and looked around. Then she stepped from the flower and moved so softly over the turf that it seemed as if she hardly touched the ground at all. She went up to a beautiful blue bell and took hold of its stem and moved it gently backwards and forwards so that the bell began to ring with low sweet tones through the wood. At once the silent forest became alive with little figures in white robes and silver girdles which came out from under mosses and grasses, from the clefts of old trees and from among the rushes by the brookside. In their hands they carried little silver water pitchers and ran about here and there with them watering the grass and the flowers. The one with the silver crown stood quietly leaning against the stem of the blue bell looking at the labor of the others who had scattered themselves in all directions through the wood. Then Annie knew that it was the queen of the fairies with her subjects. They sleep by day for they cannot bear the sun, but at night when it is warm and the stars twinkle and the moon shines, the little people come out of their hiding places and water the flowers and grass

with dew, and play and dance and enjoy their life in the night time. Annie had been looking at the elves from a distance for some time wondering at their silent industry when she saw the queen again take hold of the blue bell and ring it, and then the little creatures came from the depths of the wood and gathered around their queen. She led them to a tall mullein whose yellow blossoms shone far and wide and the little ones made a ring around the mullein and began to dance their nightly dances and to engage in all sorts of plays. Some caught each other, some played hide and seek and others played see-saw on flowers and spider's webs.

Only the queen stood apart and took no share in the games. But how was Annie astonished when she saw the queen of the fairies coming up to her. She came close to her and stood still for a moment and then said in gentle and friendly tones: «I have seen you crying, dear human child; what is the matter? Perhaps I can help you.» Then Annie told timidly how her mother was very ill and would die, and how she had lost her way gathering flowers and could not find the path to go home again. The queen of the fairies listened kindly to her and said: «Both of us have trouble. My life and that of my people is disturbed in this wood. Men have cut down the finest of the trees under which my subjects had their

abodes. The forest grows lighter every day and soon we shall not be able to find any shade in it where we can sleep. For that reason I have desired to lead my people from here, over the brook, into another part of the wood where it is still undisturbed and where there is thick shade to hide us, but we have spent several nights looking up and down the brook without finding any place where we can cross. Now if you will build us a bridge so that we can go over it quietly and safely, I will thank you for it, and show you the way home.» Annie rose up quickly, ready to follow the queen who walked on before her, and conducted her to a place in the brook where the reeds and rushes were plenty. The child pulled the longest reed stalks and laid them close together across the brook and covered them with rushes; it was not long before the bridge was ready. The queen nodded approval to Annie, and went to the great bell flower and rang it for the third time. Then the little people left their plays and dancing and gathered around the queen, again and she walked toward the bridge and the whole array went after her. Softly, but quickly the little creatures marched past Annie over the bridge and scattered themselves all about on the other side and soon not one of them was to be seen. Only the queen staid by the brook on the other side and beckoned to Annie to follow her.



Annie gathered her dress up carefully and walked through the brook and followed the fairy whose white robe showed but faintly before her for the moon was about to set and it was growing darker in the forest. At an open place in the wood the fairy stopped and said: «Stay here and when it is day you will find something in the grass that will make your mother well.» Before Annie could think, the little figure had disappeared. She saw something white shining in several places, but when she went up to it, it was only a white flower. Then Annie sat down in the grass and she was so tired with walking and with all the wonderful things she had seen that she went right to sleep. As she woke up the next morning she did not know whether she had been dreaming or whether what she thought she had seen was true, but the words of the fairy: «When it is day you will find something in the grass that will make your mother well,»

still sounded plainly in her ears. So she looked around her and the most beautiful strawberries met her eyes among the grass. At this Annie did not doubt as to what the fairy had meant and so she picked her little apron full of them and hastened home and had no trouble in finding the way by day. The sufferer at home ate the finely flavored berries with great pleasure and actually got well by means of them. Annie told her about the elves and how they had helped her to find the berries. Her mother did not believe it and shook her head incredulously. The child remained firm in her belief but as often as she went into the woods afterwards to find the elves she never could meet with them. They had probably gone to some other place and Annie never saw them again.

THE HORSE'S FOOTPRINT.

In the dark Harz mountains, just where the little stream called the Bode flows between the high hills, there stands a lofty and steep rock whose base is wet by the waters of the stream. This rock is called the Horse's Footprint and its summit is covered with the most beautiful, great trees such as oaks, beeches, and birches. On this rock there stood once, many hundred, hundred years ago a splendid royal castle. In this castle there dwelt a king with his only daughter, the beautiful princess Pimpinella. The princess had many suitors for she was known far and wide as the most lovely of king's daughters, but she rejected all these aspirants for her favor because she was in love with a shepherd who daily led his flock down the hill by the castle. Among the suitors of the princess there was also a great giant, a cruel magician and a most horrible fright in his looks, and of him the princess lived in constant fear, for she would not have him for a husband

and he had become very angry and threatened her with the most terrible revenge if she should have any body else. But the princess persisted in her refusal and so it happened when she had wandered too far beyond the limits of the domain, belonging to the castle, in search of flowers, the wicked giant was lying in wait for her and took her on his arm and in spite of her cries for help carried her violently down the mountain and stepped with her over the stream and carried her up the steep rocky shore on the other side where his strong castle was situated. There he kept the poor princess in close confinement through a whole long winter and watched her day and night. But the shepherd who had seen from a distance how the giant carried off the princess, but was too weak to go to her assistance, determined to see if he could set her free by stratagem. At last by spring he had contrived a way to do it. He tapped the young birch trees and from the sap which ran out of them he prepared a strong, sweet, intoxicating drink. With this drink he started for the castle of the giant. He found the monster lying before the gate of the tower which led to the place where the princess was imprisoned, stretched out in the sun to warm himself. The shepherd offered him the drink; the giant thought it was excellent and kept asking for more and more till at last he lost his senses and fell fast asleep.

The shepherd made use of the moment to open the gate and lead the princess from the tower. In haste and silence they led the giant's horse from the stable and mounted and rode swiftly away. They soon came to the precipice beneath which they saw the Bode flowing and on the opposite side the royal castle glittering in the sunshine. Then they thought they were saved and dismounted from the horse and began to dance for joy. But unfortunately the giant had been awakened by the hoofstrokes of the great horse which had echoed among the mountains like thunder, and was hastening after the fugitives. His long arm reached the clouds and rolled them together into a threatening storm and his voice roared the most fearful threats against the terrified pair. What could they do in this extremity? Behind them was the pursuer, the cruel giant; before them the precipice and the foaming stream. But the princess was determined not again to fall into the hands of the monster; she leaped once more upon the giant's horse and the shepherd with her and they urged him to a mighty spring so that he bore them safely across to the rocks on the other side. But at the moment when they were hanging over the abyss the princess was shaken on the horse and the golden crown fell into the water which rose up hissing to receive it. Then the royal castle on the rock instantly disappeared with a loud noise.



The princess and the shepherd were saved, but with the royal crown the castle had vanished and the kingdom was lost. The giant knew this and laughed scornfully on the opposite rock, so that the mountain quaked with the

sound. After this Pimpinella married the shepherd and became a poor but happy shepherdess and for a long time fed her flocks with him in contentment on the Harz mountains. The giant changed himself into a great black dog and kept watch beside the stream so that no one should attempt to recover the crown from the water. For whoever should draw the crown from the water was to be king and the sunken royal castle would build itself again on the cliffs. Many were attracted by this and came and tried to get the crown, but they fished up nothing but shining golden trout, and when any one went there to try it at night he was so fiercely set upon by the black dog that he had to run away as quickly as possible. Thus the king's crown lies there to this day in the water and when the sun stands over the valley or the full moon shines at night, it can be seen, gleaming, sparkling and glowing in the stream, and some travellers who have gone over the mountains in the night declare that they have seen it as the water spirits were playing with it among the waves. For my part I cannot say whether this is really so or not, but it is certainly true that whenever a youth or maiden shall come with a heart as pure as the waters of the Bode and fish for the crown with joyous faith and humble heart the dog will have no power over him and the water spirits will cast the crown into



his net and he will be king and a glorious and happy time will begin for the poor dwellers in the dark Harz mountains.

And if any one doubts this story let him only go to the valley on the Bode and climb to the place of the horse's leap and see the immense foot print which his mighty hoof made in the solid rock, and then look down into the stream and see how something glitters and shines in its waves.

THE CHRIST CHILD.

There was once a couple of poor people who had a single child and they loved the child very dearly and would have given him a great many pleasures and gratifications if they had not been so exceedingly poor. One winter as the holy Christmas eve came round, the child stood at the window and looked longingly out into the street and at the houses opposite, where he saw lights, and where they were lighting up the Christmas trees for the children. Then the father went out to get something for the child and found in the street a handsome gilded apple which some one had lost from among the ornaments of a Christmas tree. Then he bought a roll for a penny and a colored wax taper for sixpence, — for the poor man had no more, and when he came home and lighted the candle and gave the boy the roll and the apple he was very happy and thought he was quite rich. And when his mother told the boy that she had saved a little wood and would warm the room and he should have a

mug or two of warm milk in the morning, he was overjoyed and danced and clapped his little hands with delight. Accordingly he laid his roll in the table drawer in order to eat it with his milk, and played with great pleasure with the golden apple but did not want to eat it because it shone and glittered so beautifully. The next morning when the room was warm and the boy had got his milk and taken out the roll, he saw a handsome but very pale little boy looking in through the dim window which was half covered with frost; the little stranger looked very poor and seemed to be very cold. Then our little friend was sorry for the poor child out doors because he had to hunger and freeze on Christmas day; and he laid away his roll and set down his mug of milk and went and



opened the door and called the stranger in to warm himself by the stove, and he shared his milk and roll with him and at last he said: «Now that I have a guest to day I will eat my handsome apple with him.» So saying he divided the golden apple with the strange child. Finally the visiter went away with many thanks and many wishes of happiness and blessings for his little benefactor. But it did not seem as if these wishes were to be fulfilled, for the poor people fell into greater and greater poverty and suffering. Very soon the husband and after him the wife became ill and could not earn anything. So they lived a whole year in hunger and trial and when Christmas eve came round again the father had nothing to buy a taper or a roll for the child and there was not a penny for warm milk, nor even anything to warm the room with. But the child had been taught to pray, for his parents were pious and trusted in aid from God and comforted their child when he was cold and hungry, and they told him that God would come to their help even if he did not relieve them at once. The child believed this and always prayed earnestly for relief from such poverty. And now when it was so cold and dark the door suddenly opened and a clear light fell into the little room. This light came from the beautiful stranger child who had returned again. Now he did not seem

poor but very rich, for he wore a white shining dress and a bright light was around his head and he carried a cross in his hands and a glittering Christmas tree. And after him followed twelve aged venerable, kindly looking



men with silver white beards. Each one of them had a great sack on his shoulder and they took these sacks off and placed them all before the poor child. And the

Christchild, for it was he with the twelve holy apostles, spoke to the astonished boy. «Last year you shared your apple with me and I took the seeds and planted them for you in the heavenly garden of paradise. A great tree has grown up from them and borne fruit a hundred fold and that I here bring to thee», and he set the tree before the poor child its branches bending down under the weight of the most beautiful golden apples. «And last year you shared your roll with me and I have taken as many kernels of wheat as there were in the roll and sowed them in the heavenly garden of paradise. And the seed sprang up and has borne fruit a thousand fold which I bring thee to day in return.» Then the Christchild took the cross and put it in the stove and lighted it with a taper from the Christmas tree saying to the poor child that it was the cross which he had borne and which should now be taken from him. The sacks were full of the finest flour and the apples of the Christmas tree were pure gold. And so the child and his parents became rich and very happy people.

THE GOLD BUG.

Here lived once two young Gold Bugs, and two green, golden, glittering, happy things they were. And one said: «Come, to day is warm and sunny, come we will have a day of pleasure!» — «Yes indeed,» said the other, «but how shall we do it?» «Well,» answered the first, «we will go to a dance.» — «Good,» said the other, and so they both flew to a brook where two beautiful Dragonflies, one green and one blue, were hovering over the water and flying from one water flower to another. «Dance with the blue dragonfly, I will dance with the green one,» said the first gold bug. «No,» said the second gold bug, «I will dance with the green one and you shall dance with the blue.» «But this the first would not agree to, and they began to dispute vehemently which should have the blue and which the green dragon-

fly. But when at last they looked around for them they found that two other gold bugs had come and danced with the dragonflies and had flown away with them, and so the disputants had nothing to do but sit there and look after their lost beauties. After a while one of the gold bugs said to the other: «What shall we do now?» — «O,» answered the other, «we will play something.» «Yes,» said the first, «but what shall we play?» «Well, we'll play hide and seek,» said the second. — «Yes, but tag is better than hide and seek,» was the reply. «We'll play tag.» «No,» answered the second, «I don't like tag,» and flew away to hide himself, but the first flew right after him and found him in a moment and so there was no sport in it at all. And as the first would sit still when the second wanted to catch him, they could not make out to play tag and both got vexed and irritable. This they found to be tedious, but yet neither would give in to the other. However one of them thought that they might go and swing. This plan was agreed to and as they saw a beautiful white bellflower standing near, the first one said: «I will climb up into the flower and do you stand beside the stalk down below and rock the flower and we will swing in that way.» «O,» said the second, «you are smart; but I don't think we can do it that way. I will sit in the flower but I don't want to rock it.» Then

doth of them climbed into the flower and each tried to push the other out, and they scuffled and tore the flower till at last they both tumbled out. But as there were a great many bellflowers near by, each of them flew into one in the expectation that the other would follow after and rock him. But each waited in vain and after a while they came out again in disappointment and vexation and flew away one here and the other there to other gold bugs to play with them. But as they looked in such ill humor and as the others had already noticed from a distance how they quarrelled with each other, they would not have anything to do with them but flew away and left them alone. Then an old gold bug came flying up and as he saw them sitting so sulkily he asked what was the matter. At this they began complaining and lamenting, and each said about the other that he was quarrelsome, and unbearable, and obstinate, and for those reasons they could not play together. «You are both silly gold bugs,» said the old one. «Now just fllow my advice and do first one and then the other what you each want and then you will get on better.» «Yes,» said the young gold bugs, «but which shall begin?» «Why the best natured and wisest,» said the old one. At this, as each wanted to pass for the best natured and wisest, in the strife which should be the first to yield they almost

spoilt their play again, till at last one was really wiser than the other and climbed into the bellflower and let himself be rocked. Presently the other felt ashamed that his comrade had outdone him in giving up, and then he climbed up into the flower and let the other go down and rock him. That made excellent sport for them. After a while the gold bug in the flower said: «Now you have rocked me and if you want to play hide and seek, I will seek you.» Then the other flew away and hid himself in the flowers and grass and when his playmate found him they had a great deal of fun and they fell over each other and leaped about in the flowers for pleasure. «Now you have sought me,» said the one that had hid, «and if you want to play tag, I will chase you.» Then the other flew away, buzz, buzz, buzz, over flowers and grasses, through bushes and hedges. That was rare sport and the other gold bugs saw that they were now sociable and happy and there was a great buzzing and murmuring and at last they all sang together the gold bug's song:

Buzz, buzz gold bug fine,
Out and in where blossoms shine;
Fly through fields and forests gay,
Through the wide world, far away.

Buzz, buzz gold bug fine,
Sleep where fragrant flowerets twine;
Make thy bed the meadow grass,
And the dew thy looking glass.

Buzz, buzz gold bug fine,
Dancing where the sunbeams shine!
Rock thyself on bloom and spray,
Never weary with the play!

THE COFFEE POT AND MILK PITCHER.

77

There was once a fat old cook who had scoured her kitchen and arranged it in the very neatest way and then she stood and looked around and was delighted with the sight of the white porcelain, the shining copper kettles and the bright crystal glassware, that she had placed all in good order around on the walls. Finally she took a sieve full of the finest white sand and sifted it over the stone floor and then she thought no lady's boudoir was as handsome as her kitchen. She was tired with all the work she had done and after she had kindled the coalfire on the hearth and it burnt so that the copper teakettle, which was scoured as bright as gold, seemed to be in a blaze and then began to sing, she put a great iron pot nearer the fire pushed the settee up to the hearth and sat down to peel potatoes for the soup.

Everything was still in the kitchen except the crackling of the coal, the buzzing of a few flies around the

warm hearth, and a gentle scraping and cutting as the cook pared the potatoes. She must have been tired to death for as she sat there at work she could hardly keep her eyes open. At first she peeled thin and nicely as an economical cook always does especially when it has been



a bad season for potatoes and they are very dear. But gradually the parings grew thicker and thicker and as she began to nod she even cut off great pieces of the potatoes. At last she leaned back against the wall, her hands fell upon her lap, the half pared potatoes rolled about the kitchen and she lost herself entirely. Then she suddenly heard a noise as if of a fine little voice and as she partly

opened her weary eyes she saw and heard the great white porcelain coffee pot high upon a shelf opposite, whispering with its neighbor the milk pitcher. «This is a hard life,» said the coffee pot to the milk pitcher, «every day coffee and nothing but coffee; always drinking and nothing at all to eat.» «That's true,» answered the milk pitcher. «Milk, milk, always milk; the eternal thin blue milk; it often seems so flat and insipid to me.» «Well,» said the coffee pot, «what if we got something for ourselves?» I will take a piece of that roast venison down there. «And I will take a little sausage,» said the milk pitcher.

The old iron pot standing over the fire heard this talk and raised slowly the tin cover that was over him and blew out the steam, bubbled and shook and groaned and said to both of them while his tin cap fell back now and then.

«Don't do that! — It's against the order of the kitchen. — No good will come of it! — I have nothing but water year out, year in! — Have to put up with it! — I have grown old so! — Let things be as they are.» «What!» said the coffee pot vehemently, «the order of the kitchen is just what I don't like; you can talk; with meat and meat broth anybody can make out, but nothing but coffee is another thing.» The milk pitcher was of a more retiring nature and probably thought that the old bubbler was in

the right after all. Accordingly she said to the coffee-pot: «Don't let us do it.» But the latter climbed nimbly on her three handsome little feet down from the shelf and ran to the roast venison and cut off a piece with her long nose and then she carefully took the cap that covered her head, put the piece of venison in, put the cover on again and climbed back to the shelf. «Now,» said she, «when the cook puts in coffee I shall have coffee and meat and meat broth all at once.» When the milk pitcher saw that there was no difficulty she got upon her feet, climbed down, put in a piece of sausage and climbed upon the shelf again and said: «Now when the cook puts

in milk, I shall have milk and sausage and sausage broth all together.» The old iron pot by the fire raised his tin cap again blew off the steam bubbled, and shook and said: «Much good may it do you.»



Meanwhile the whole kitchen was looking on in excitement. The plates rolled up to each other on the shelf and asked mysteriously what would be done now that the coffee pot and milk pitcher had taken meat and sausage:

the clear, bright glasses rang together and declared plainly that it was wrong to do so, and the silver voices of the spoons were also heard saying that no good could come of it and that it would turn out that the old iron pot was right. But the tin pans, dishes, and scoops that every day got something new to lick up and taste, cried and made a great hubbub and said that they could not blame the coffee pot and milk pitcher because they could not be contented with coffee and milk. At this the tea kettle that was scoured till it shone like gold puffed out his glowing cheeks and said psh — sh — — sh!

At the same moment the kitchen door was opened and the scullion came in and slammed the door behind him so that the windows shook and rattled. At this the fat cook jumped up affrighted, rubbed her eyes and looked attentively around. She did not know whether she had been dreaming or whether the coffee pot and the milk pitcher and the iron pot had actually done and said all that we have written. But the pot and the pitcher and all the things stood quietly in their places, only some of the tin utensils were shaking on their nails with the slamming of the door and the tea kettle that was scoured till it shone like gold was letting the boiling water run out of its long crooked neck hissing all over the kitchen.

«What strange things happen to a body,» said the cook to the scullion and told him what she had just seen and heard. «That's all nonsense,» said the boy, «you have been dreaming: it comes from your drinking too much coffee; coffee makes the blood thick and makes people sleep and then they have such queer dreams.»

The cook too was perfectly convinced that she had been dreaming for when she looked at the potato parings that she had cut off; she knew perfectly well, that she had done it when she was half asleep. So she went busily to work and pared the rest and cooked the soup and saw to every thing and did whatever was to be done in the kitchen and in the hall. When at evening she had the soup ready she went to cut some roast venison and sausage in slices and put them on a plate, but she found that a piece of venison and a sausage were missing. Involuntarily she looked up to the coffee pot and the milk pitcher but they stood quietly on their shelf shining white as innocence. «Nonsense,» said the cook aloud to herself, «I have been dreaming; it was certainly the cat, and she shall not escape a whipping for it.» And then she cut the roast meat and sausage in very thin slices, for there was only a little left and she had to cover over a plate with them, or else she was afraid the lady of the house would scold her. While she was doing this the milk pitcher

whispered to the coffee pot: «Come let's confess or else the cat will get a whipping.» «No, no,» answered the coffee pot, «that's no more than the cat deserves. If she has'nt taken anything now, she has done it often enough before, when some other cat has been punished; so to day she can afford to take a flogging.» Meanwhile the cat came out mewling from behind the range where she had been hidden asleep. The smell of the roast meat had probably waked her up, and the cook who did not know how she should cover the plate with the thin slices of venison and sausage, fell into a passion at the sight of the cat, seized her by the skin and held her nose close to the roast meat and beat her vigorously and said: «You greedy creature, it was you, and I'll teach you to let roast meat alone: you may catch mice but you shan't carry off sausagès.» At last the cat got loose, jumped over the kitchen table, threw down a handsome cup and in her terror leaped through a window pane out into the garden, and the whole window rung and clattered at her exit.

At this the mistress of the house came in and asked what made the noise and what was going on. And as she saw the broken cup lying on the floor she was very angry with the cook. But the cook excused herself and said it was the cat, and that she had also eaten up the

meat and the sausage. «Yes, yes,» replied the lady very angry, «it is always the cat, the cat does everything. But I don't believe you and you shall pay for the cup and the window glass.» This was alarming to the cook, for the cup was very finely painted and must have cost a deal of money. She stooped down in ill humor to pick up the fragments and got the broom to sweep the pieces of porcelain together. Then the milk pitcher said softly to the coffee pot: «We must own it now, or else the poor cook will have to pay the damage.» «Well what if she does,» answered the coffee pot. «She has often enough taken things and said it was the cat, and the cat has been punished when she was innocent, let her suffer once for the cat's fault.» When the cook had swept up the pieces and stood up again her eye accidentally fell upon the milk pitcher and the coffee pot, and whether it was really so, or long stooping had made her a little dizzy she thought she saw plainly the snake's head on the long nose of the coffee pot, moving. She thought of her strange dream and was on the point of getting on the table to examine the two vessels when the mistress of the house rang for her to talk with her about the dinner next day and the guests who were expected. The cook received all sorts of directions and completely forgot her dream and the queer behaviour of the coffee pot and milk

pitcher. Indeed the next day when after dinner the coffee was sent for immediately, she was so much in haste that she poured the coffee and cream into the coffee pot and milk pitcher without looking into them before hand. Accordingly the venison and sausage remained there and the coffee and milk took a taste from them.

The mistress of the house poured out the coffee and the guests took some but soon set their cups down without drinking. «Why don't you drink some?» said the hostess to the guests. Every one had some excuse. For one the coffee was too hot, another found it too strong, and a third was forbidden to drink coffee by his physician. At last the hostess gave a cup to her little daughter who at once made a face at it and said: «Why Mamma, how does the coffee taste? The lady noticed this and tasted the coffee and the cream and was not a little alarmed at the beverage she had put before her guests. She took both the vessels and ran in anger down into the kitchen and the cook received a hard scolding for making such coffee or rather for letting the vessels go in such a slovenly condition that they made the coffee taste badly. The cook protested that only the day before she had washed them out with boiling water and that they certainly were perfectly clean. At this the lady was greatly provoked, and threatened to sent off the cook if she made any more

answers, and said it was her fault that the coffee was bad. Now while the lady went into the dining room and brought out new coffee to be boiled and the cook stood stupefied and could not understand the reason why the coffee was bad, the milk pitcher whispered to the coffee pot: «Now must n't we tell?» «I believe she did wash us clean this time,» was the answer, «but yet there have been times enough when she did n't. The scolding she has got to day is no more than she deserves for former misbehaviour.» The cook had heard nothing of this conversation, but when she smelt of the coffee and cream, her dream of the day before came to her mind. One smelt of venison, the other of something smoked. She poured out the milk and coffee and found the sausage and roast meat and then she stood with the vessels in her hand as if rooted to the floor with astonishment. But suddenly she understood it all and called her mistress and said in vexation and anger: «See madam! you will believe that this was not me; it certainly was the scullion who did it, — the rascal — he played me the trick. I told him yesterday my dream how the coffee pot and milk pitcher took the roast meat and sausage and then he went and put the roast meat and sausage in them so as to make fun of me. Yes, yes madam, there is no mistake, it was he, the — —.» And the cook doubled up her fist as

if she would rush upon the boy if he were only there. Then the mistress called up the scullion and scolded him for the silly joke which he had played off. But he was rude and said he did not do it, and that the cook was always trying to get something against him. At this the noise grew high. The lady scolded, the cook raved, and the boy grew ruder and ruder, so that the milk pitcher was afraid and sorry and said to the coffee pot: «Come, now we must tell or else all will turn out badly.» But the coffee pot replied: «What's that to us? If the boy is not to blame to day he has played tricks enough on the cook before and never been punished. Now let him suffer for it, and as for madam she may put up with his insolence for once, for often enough she is unjust to the servants when she is angry.»

In the contention and noise nobody heard the low words of the two vessels and the cook who at last could not bear with the obstinate boy any longer fell into a rage and gave him a smart box on the ear. At this he was maddened and snatched the coffee pot out of her hand and flung it at her head so that the blood gushed out over her face and the pot broke in pieces and the coffee in it was spattered over the new dress of the mistress. The boy ran out of the room and the lady



and the cook cried and lamented after him; the one on account of her head, the other on account of her dress.

While the lady went to clean her dress and the cook to her chamber to wash off the blood it was as still in the kitchen as if nothing had happened and the old iron pot that stood by the fire and bubbled, slowly raised his tin cover, blew off clouds of steam and said to the milk pitcher: «I told you before, no good comes of breaking the rules.» «Well,» said the milk pitcher, «they all deserve what they have got, and if they did n't deserve it to day why that makes no difference.» «You'll get your pay too, and if not to day, — that will make no difference,» — bubbled the old iron pot. And in fact it

was not long before the cook came back with her head bound up, sat down by the sink and began to wash up the things. She took the milk pitcher and scoured it with soap and sand so that it hurt badly. And for a long time after the pitcher got no milk for as often as the cook was going to pour some in she perceived an unpleasant odor of smoked sausage and then she would take the pitcher and give it another scouring so that it would groan and squeak.

The old iron pot always told this story as he sat quietly bubbling over the fire to all the other vessels that came into the kitchen as a friendly warning to them not to wish for anything that did not belong to them. Most likely they all took it to heart, at least no body has ever heard since that a coffee pot has gone to get roast meat or a milk pitcher sausages.

THE PRINCESS UNCA.

In the beautiful country of Thuringia in the midst of a vast lake whose waters were as clear as a mirror there was in old times a green island whose shores were covered with all kinds of flowers. And on the island there stood a splendid royal castle whose golden towers rose aloft high above the green trees around them. In the castle dwelt the princess Unca famed far and wide for her beauty; she kept a great household of servant men and maidens and gave brilliant feasts to which princes and lords, knights, and ladies flocked from the most remote countries; and they were ferried over to the island on the beautiful gondolas and boats which were always ready for the purpose. And as the princess was not only beautiful but also very rich, there were many suitors who sought her hand. But the princess was not as good as she was beautiful and not as kind as she was rich: she had a proud and haughty mind and a wicked, malicious heart. Accordingly she contemptuously rejected all her suitors for she would not be subjected to a husband but

was determined to rule and command herself. Yet new suitors came constantly in great numbers to take the place of the rejected ones, attracted by the fame of her beauty and her riches.

Once on the evening of a hot summer day when the full moon was shining in all its splendor, the princess was walking for pleasure in the garden of her castle with her knights and ladies and a large company of noble guests from abroad.

Then a murmur of dissatisfaction arose among the knights and gentlemen because they had come so great a distance to pay their court to the princess and because she had as yet made choice of no one for a husband. Unca heard what they said and stepped to the stone well curb that stood in the midst of the garden, loosened a golden bracelet from her arm and threw it down into the water which foamed and sparkled as it fell. «Now gentlemen,» said Unca, «whoever shall bring that bracelet back to me shall be my husband. Till the next full moon you may seek for it and in that time you can certainly get it. Then I invite you all to a feast and we will see who has found the bracelet.» At this all were silent only Unca laughed scornfully, and in the well there was a murmuring sound and they thought that by the light of the moon they could see a face look out of the water

and laugh and nod and vanish. After this many of the noble gentlemen left the island in anger because the prin-



cess demanded an impossible thing for the well was full of water and though people had often tried to sound it, they could never reach the bottom.

When the full moon came round again the princess prepared a splendid feast. All the halls and chambers of the castle were opened and illuminated, music sounded through them and the guests danced. Unca sat on a golden throne looking at the crowd. Then as soon as it was midnight, a fisherman appeared at the door of the ball room. He was lofty in person and of vigorous and striking appearance. His net which was thrown woven of

silver threads he carried by a staff over his shoulder, his doublet was buttoned with muscle shells and drops of water hung upon his hair and beard as if he had but just come out of some lake or stream. The whole company looked curiously at the fisherman and some thought they had seen his face before, but where they could not tell. He paid not the least attention to the crowd but walked straight up to the throne and unfolded his silver net, took out the golden bracelet and reached it to the princess who looked on in astonishment. «How did you get the bracelet?» at last enquired the princess. «I fished for it in the well,» said the fisherman, «and come to carry you home as my bride, according to your promise.» At this Unca laughed scornfully and said that he could not suppose that she would take a common fisher for her husband. It was right that he had brought back the bracelet, and now he might go out and amuse himself with the servants and then go back where he came from. Then the face of the fisherman lowered and he raised his silver net threateningly and shook it so that some clear drops of water fell upon the face of the princess and then he turned and left the house.

The guests were not a little surprised at the fisherman and wondered how he got the bracelet and how he had dared to threaten the princess. But she sent some

servants in haste after him to seize him on account of his insolence. When they reached the castle garden they saw the fisherman step over the well curb, make another threatening gesture at his pursuers and vanish in the well. They went up to the well but they could see nothing except the reflection of the moon in the clear water.

The next day the princess went with her household and her guests walking on the island and came to a water fall where the water rushed foaming from the rocks into a deep abyss. The knights and ladies were still secretly speaking of the strange fisherman and how the princess had broken her word in not taking him for her husband. Unca heard them and said: «Now, gentlemen, you will certainly be able to do as much as the fisherman could. He that brings back this pearl to me shall certainly be my husband. You shall have till the next full moon to search for it. Then I invite you again to a feast and we will see who is the fortunate man.» Thereupon she flung a costly pearl into the water which hissed and foamed as it fell. Silently the nobles and knights gazed upon the whirlpool and some thought they saw there a man's countenance with the features of the fisherman. But Unca laughed and thought that no one would bring back the pearl. Although the knights and gentlemen knew it was impossible for them to get the pearl out of the whirlpool

they still remained on the island for they thought of the fisherman and whether he would not come again with the pearl.

When the time was up and the moon was full, Unca again prepared a splendid feast. Her halls shone in the clear light of tapers and the crowd of guests were enjoying themselves in the dance. Unca sat on her golden throne and looked at the splendor and delight around her. And when it was midnight a stranger of wonderful appearance suddenly strode through the open door of the ball room and no one could tell from whence he had come. He was a tall and imposing figure, with a short mantle woven of rushes, a round hat of rushes decorated with shells was on his head and he carried a great shell hanging like a satchel over his shoulder by a string of pearls. In one hand he bore a long traveller's staff and in the other a handsome shell. From the long ringlets of his hair and his beard water was falling and crystal drops stood on his mantle of rushes and on his hat. The guests gazed at him in astonishment as he went fearlessly through them up to the throne, and many thought that in him they could recognize the fisherman. Unca asked what he wanted, and he replied that he had heard her oath to take as her husband the man who should restore the pearl to her. Accordingly he had brought it and was

ready to take her home as his wife. Then he handed to the princess the muscle that he held in his hand and when she opened it she found the pearl lying within. At this the princess shrunk back in terror for she had never believed it possible that the pearl should be brought back to her; and the stranger stood there before her with a mien so serious that it did not seem as if he would suffer himself to be refused. But the heart of Unca knew nothing of truth and so she broke her word a second time, and said laughing to the stranger that what she had said at the waterfall was only a jest and never could be made earnest and that she could not think of marrying an unknown beggar who had come from nobody knew where and who might perhaps be a cheat if not a hobgoblin. For, no human being, she said, could have got the pearl out of the raging whirlpool and he must leave the hall that moment and go back where he came from. Thereupon with angry looks he raised his hand and staff against the breaker of her word, and shook his hands so that fine streams of water gushed from his fingers upon the face of the princess till she cried out with pain and the guests crowded around to protect her and to hold fast the stranger. But he raised his hands threateningly against the crowd and streams of water flowed from his fingers right and left and a thick stream broke

from his uplifted staff against the roof and falling back wetted all over every one on whom it fell. The crowd gave way in fright and the stranger, who sprinkled them as he went from the hall and from the castle, disappeared in the shade of the trees. The feast was thus broken up and most of the guests were full of fear and left the castle and the island that very night.

Unca now thought day and night of revenge and how she could get the stranger into her power, for nobody knew where he came from or whither he had gone. One day she assembled her knights and ladies and her guests and went with them out upon the shore of the island and they embarked in the beautifully decorated gondolas for a pleasure sail on the lake.

Unca looked carefully and searchingly along the shores, but though she saw a fisherman here and there casting his net or his line, not one of them was the man she was looking for and of the stranger not a trace could be found. All pleasure seemed to be banished from among her guests since the evening of the festival for all thoughts were upon the mysterious stranger. At this the princess was disturbed for she saw how silent and anxious were all around her and she guessed what were the thoughts of her attendants. This made her more enraged than ever at the unknown whom she would so

gladly have had in her power if she had only known how to get him. At last the thought occurred to her that she might perhaps beguile him into her hands and so she stood up and stepped with a bold mind to the edge of the boat: «See here, you knights and gentlemen,» said she, «see this precious jewel which I draw from my finger. Whoever brings it back to me on the next full moon shall surely and truly be my husband and I will dance with him the wedding dance.» And she cast the ring into the lake and the water leaped up and foamed where it fell; and the ladies looked in fear at the white foam and whispered to themselves secretly and timidly something about nixes and water-men.

Many of the knights and nobles now clearly understood the wicked and malicious spirit of the princess and left the island with horror, for they thought she must come to a bad end and they did not wish to remain any longer in her vicinity.

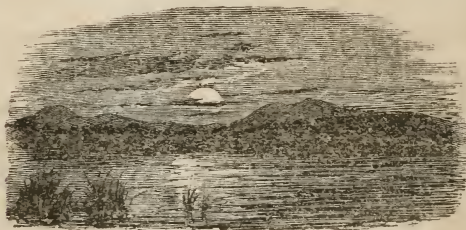
The nearer it approached to the full moon, the more industriously the princess sought for the fisherman and for the unknown, but nowhere could she discover a trace of either. When the day came she had a feast prepared more splendid and magnificent than either of the former ones, and a great number of noble gentlemen and ladies were invited. To her household she gave orders that

they should strictly observe every one who came into the castle and if the fisherman or the unknown made their appearance they should seize them immediately. And when it was evening and the whole castle shone with light, and the dancing hall especially glittered and gleamed with countless tapers and with the costly ornaments of the ladies, Unca sat upon her throne looking eagerly through the open door into the antechamber to see if the fisherman or the stranger would appear, but neither was to be seen. At last when it was midnight a train of new and strange guests appeared at the entrance of the hall and the company were surprised and respectfully made room for them. It seemed to be a person of high rank who came in or rather a king, so majestic was his form and so rich his robes of sea green silk adorned with pearls, while a crown of pearls shone on his forehead and a band of pearls hung over his shoulder with a large winding horn of shell attached to it. The train that followed this stranger consisted wholly of maidens, pale and blue eyed with long, white, thin trailing garments, and long, white delicate veils over their smooth flowing hair, and both garments and veils were spangled all over with pearls.

Just as the stranger entered the hall a violent thunder-storm broke out over the lake and island after the

hot summer day. The thunder rolled, the storm howled and the roaring of the lake was heard through the open windows. The stranger did not mind the storm, or the wind, or the astonished company, but walked directly to the throne from which the princess rose to welcome so distinguished a guest. «I have heard your oath,» said the stranger, «to take for a husband the man who should bring back the ring to you. Here is the ring and there are the bridemaids, come let us dance the bridal dance.» The princess was alarmed at the earnest and imperative manner of the stranger and could not resist as he put the ring upon her finger. The storm without grew more and more furious, more and more of the pale maidens came into the hall and the water dropped from their long veils. Then the stranger took the hand of the princess to lead her to the dance, but his grasp was cold and moist, and Unca snatched her hand from him crying in terror: «Away with you, you sea monster, I will have nothing to do with you!» and she tried to escape. But the pale maidens came close around her and formed a ring, and cast their long veils over her and took her in them, and the sea king blew his muscle shell horn, the storm raged louder and louder, the waters roared nearer and nearer and overflowed the island and the castle and amid the storm and thunder all disappeared in the night and the flood.

As the next morning the sun rose bright and cheerful and the fishermen went to the shore of the lake to see after their boats and nets, the island had vanished and the lake lay silent and clear and peaceful. Since that time in the warm summer nights the people have sometimes heard low sounds of complaining from the depths of the lake and they think they come from Unca the proud princess. They think she has been punished for breaking her oath by being changed into a hateful water snake and now must live in the water forever. And she cannot put away the wickedness of her heart and so seeks by her complaining and grieving to beguile nightly travellers into the water that they may find their death there. And if any one sails over the lake when the sun is shining brightly or at the full of the moon he can see down at the bottom the golden towers of the sunken castle still bright and glittering.







NUTCRACKER AND SUGARDOLLY.

FIRST CHAPTER.

HOW A FRUIT DEALER AND HIS WIFE STEAL A NUT AND AN EGG AND WHAT COMES OF IT.

 fruit dealer had gone through the country with his wife. He had bought nuts, and the wife eggs and they were carrying home their purchases in baskets on their backs. And now they were on the road to the city in order to sell their nuts and eggs there the next day. As it was hot weather they left the sunny high-road and struck into a by-way that led through a little thicket where it was shady and cool walking. Both sighed under the burden of their baskets and reckoned up how much they would make by them and what they would buy with the money. While they were talking it over they came to the splendid garden of the Fairy Honey-mouth. There was a silver fence around it, with a great golden lattice gate and within there were wonderful shining

flowers such as the two travellers had never seen before; and birds of many glittering colors sat on the boughs of the great trees and sang most sweetly. On each side of the golden gate there was a tree. One of them was a lofty nut tree with green nuts bigger than hens' eggs; the other a beautiful large sugar tree, every bit of which was sugar. The trunk, the branches, the leaves, the blossoms, the fruit, all were sugar. The two wanderers stood at the gate and gazed through; they would have liked vastly to get in if only it had not been shut. «Just see,» said the man to his wife, «what fine white sand the paths are strewn with.» «I believe it is sugar,» answered the wife, «and I must try it.» Then she wet her finger and put it through the gate into the white sand and tasted of it: she was not mistaken, it tasted sweet, it was really sugar. The woman would have been delighted to fill her pockets with the sugar for she could not often buy any, the egg trade brought in so little money; and she often had to drink her coffee without any sugar at all, but the lattice work was too close and she could not get her hand through. At last the man said: «Let us climb upon the gate so that we can get a good look at the inside there.» So they set their baskets down and climbed upon the latticed gate and looked into the garden which was more splendid than anything they had ever



seen. By climbing up they had got so near to the nut and sugar trees that they saw a great nest with a beautiful great, white, egg in it. After they had looked at everything both wanted to try the sugar work on the tree and reached out their hands to take some. But as they

did so, all the birds in the garden came flying up and cried: «Don't do it! Don't do it.» This frightened them and they drew back their hands; but as soon as the birds had flown away again they reached out once more for some of the sweet things; the birds came quickly back again and cried: «Don't do it! Don't do it.» They did not like this at all, and the man said: «After all they are nothing, but silly birds. I must at least have a big nut off the tree here.» «Yes,» said the wife, «and I'll take this great egg out of the nest.» So he took a nut and she the egg notwithstanding the birds cried with all their might: «Don't do it! Don't do it! Don't do it!»

The nut dealer and his wife then went on towards the city talking all the way about the wonderful garden till finally at evening they arrived in the city and went home to their own house. Then they looked at the big nut and the egg again and could not tell certainly whether they should keep them both and eat them themselves, or sell them and perhaps get a high price for them. At last they determined to put the egg under the white hen, whose nest was beneath the front stairs, and see what sort of a wonderful bird would be hatched out of it. So they took the hen and took away her own eggs at which she set up a squall and a cackling till the great egg was put in the nest and then she immediately folded her wings

over it and was quiet. But the nut they resolved to open for breakfast the next day and see whether it contained a sweet kernel.

The next morning as the wife was carrying the breakfast from the kitchen up into the room where they were to eat it, it happened that the cockerel marched behind her; perhaps he had done this before and sometimes got a bite of the breakfast. Now as she set the food down on the table she hit the nut without noticing it so that it rolled off the table on the floor. The cockerel ran up to it and picked it about with his beak; perhaps he thought it was a nice morsel for him. Whether it was that the cockerel had a very sharp bite or that the nut shell was cracked in falling from the table, I don't know. But at any rate, it opened and the man and his wife saw with astonishment not a kernel, but a real human head peeping



out of it. By degrees a complete little mannikin crawled out with a big head and little bits of thin legs. When he had thrown off all the shell they saw that he was dressed in red trowsers and a black hussar's jacket, a wig with a plumed hat and a sword by his side. He did not appear to be very well pleased with the world for he made a peevish face, yawned and showed such a monstrous mouth that the man and his wife were almost frightened at it.

While the two stood there gazing at this wonder a loud cackling was set up out doors. The wife stepped into the passage way and there she saw the white hen with loud crowing and cackling picking at the big egg. She called her husband and both were astonished by a new wonder, for a human face peeped out of the egg also and by degrees a pretty little woman came forth with a little silk dress and shoes. She had a very pleasant and kindly little face and soon began to dance in the prettiest manner. By this time the mannikin from the nut had come, and his peevish face cleared up as soon as he saw the little figure like a doll dancing. The man and wife stood there in silence for a long time looking now at the little lady and now at the little man and then at each other. At last the man said: «Wife, we have no children and these little creatures are here; let us take

them in the place of children.» The wife agreed to this and called the little ones into the room to give them some



breakfast. The mannikin offered his hand to the little lady and both followed the man and his wife to the table. The man gave each a piece of bread and butter, but the little fellow made a discontented face and the little lady turned up her nose with contempt so that it was easy to see

that they did not like the fare. The wife gave them some coffee but they did not like that either. This was vexatious and the wife said in an angry tone to her husband: «This is always the way when people take other folks' children, nothing but trouble comes of it.» The man tried to comfort his wife and told her that the children would soon learn to eat if they were hungry and perhaps they were now rather timid. Meanwhile the little fellow had gone to a basket of nuts that stood in the corner and crack! crack! bit open one after the other and devoured them with great appetite. «Rascal,» cried the nut pedlar, «my nuts! That's a fine story! Leave the

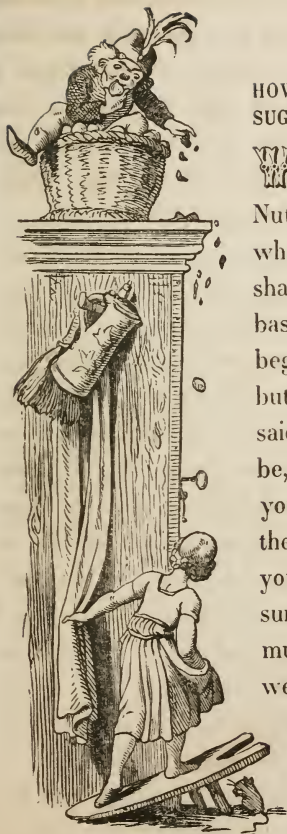
nuts alone, will you!» The little fellow made an ugly face and dropped his under lip so that the kernels of the nuts fell from his mouth. The wife had forgotten her coffee in astonishment at the sharp bite of the little fellow and now as she turned to drink it, she saw that the little lady had taken a lump of sugar while she was looking away and was nibbling at it. «O you little sweet tooth,» cried the wife, «who told you to do that!» and she made haste and shut up the sugar bowl. Both were now quite angry at their adopted children. At last the wife asked, «well, what shall we call the children? They must have names if we have to scold them.» «I'll call the little rogue nutcracker,» said the fruit pedlar, «for he cracks them as if he had a knack at it.» «Yes, yes,» said the wife, «he 'll make fine times with the nuts, that you will find out, for if he goes on in this way you won't make another penny with them.» The man answered in a tone of vexation: «Don't let us fret before the time; I won't put the nuts again where he can get at them, and he has such a big head and such a serious look that I'll bet he will turn out a smart fellow and perhaps he will learn a great deal and be a distinguished man. But with the little lady it's a bad case if she eats sugar.» «Leave the little one to me,» said the wife somewhat excited, «she has nibbled a little sugar and her name shall be Sugardolly.

But I'll fasten up the sugar bowl when there is any in it, and Dolly is a pretty little thing that one can take pleasure in. Perhaps she may live to marry a rich man and that will bring us both wealth and honor.» So the married pair talked over the matter till at last each went to his business, the man to the market to sell his nuts and the wife into different houses to dispose of her eggs. Nut-cracker and Sugardolly were shut up together.

SECOND CHAPTER.

HOW IT GOES WITH NUTCRACKER AND SUGARDOLLY AT THEIR FOSTERPARENTS.

When the little ones were alone Nutcracker came out of the corner where he had sulkily crept, looked sharp about the room and saw a basket of nuts on a cupboard. He began at once to climb up for them but Sugardolly came to him and said: «Come Nutcracker let them be, perhaps you will fall and break your neck or your legs and when the man comes home and sees that you have been eating nuts he will surely scold.» «Well what of that,» muttered Nutcracker; «nuts taste well and I must have some.» So saying he mounted the cupboard and sat down in the basket and cracked away in high glee and flung the shells down on the floor.



When the man and his wife came home and saw the disorder they were very angry. The wife who liked to have every thing neat made haste and got the broom and swept up the shells and in doing it hit Nutcracker a thump that made him cry out with pain. Sugardolly who was sorry to see that ran out into the garden where she plucked the flowers to suck out their honey. She called Nutcracker to her, for he had stolen after her with an angry face, and asked him to take some of the sweet flowers. But he snarled at her and said that was no sort of food for him, she might keep them herself, he never could be satisfied with such things. He wanted nuts and if he could not get nuts why he would not eat anything.

Pretty soon the wife came into the garden to cut flowers for a bouquet, when she saw the broken blossoms and perceived that Sugardolly still held some in her hand and sucked them, she was angry for she did not like to lose the flowers and so Dolly got a blow. At this Nutcracker fell into a great rage and drew his sword and went behind the woman and cut and thrust at her legs. But she had thick stockings on and hardly felt it and perhaps thought some insect had stung her, or else Nutcracker would have received a few blows also.

Things went on the next day and the next and the next just as they did the first. Nutcracker was always

on the watch for nuts and when he found them he cracked and ate them without paying any regard to Sugardolly's entreaties, for she always besought him not to excite the anger of their foster father. And soon the man did not know where he should hide his nuts so as to keep them safe from Nutcracker who found his way into every corner of the house. Once the nut pedlar had hung a basket full of nuts on a hook on the wall, for he thought that the rogue could not climb up on the wall. But the man's night-gown hung on the hook also and the little fellow took hold of it and climbed up nimbly and dexterously with his thin legs till he got into the nut basket and sat there as happy as a lord enjoying the nuts till the cracking betrayed him and the man came and drove him down. Sugardolly who was gay and pleasant was much more liked by her fosterparents, than the grumbling Nutcracker who made nothing but disorder in the house and not only ate up the nuts when he could get at them but kept away the people that came into the house to buy them. He frightened them so with his tricks and was so spiteful and passionate towards all that bought nuts and carried them away that they said he was a goblin and came no more to the house of the nut pedlar. The man saw how this was and so his dislike to Nutcracker increased more and more.

But Sugardolly loved Nutcracker very much for he was her constant companion both when their foster parents were gone and when they were at home, and was always good and kind to her, always protected her against danger and did everything to please her. When she danced and the surly dog of the nut pedlar tried to trip her up he always drove him back with his sword and when it rained out of doors he would steal out into



the garden to get sweet flowers for Dolly so that she need not get wet and spoil her silk dress. Once when the two little creatures were alone in the room and

Dolly had been dancing about in high glee she happened to hit the oil jug so that it fell over and the oil ran out. Dolly in terror ran behind the stove for she was afraid of the scolding of the woman. And as the latter came into the room and saw the oil spilt over the floor she cried in a high passion: «Who has turned over the oil

jug? Who has spilt the oil? Oil is dear and I shall have to scour a great while before I can get the stain out of the floor.» Dolly could not stir for fear, but Nutcracker stood quietly beside the oil and said not a word. The woman thought he had thrown over the jug and struck him several hard blows. At this Dolly hastened out of her hiding place and confessed her fault with great sorrow. Then the woman stopped striking Nutcracker, but he had already received the punishment and Dolly cried and begged him not to be angry with her. The little fellow looked quite kindly at Dolly and from that time she loved Nutcracker twice as much as ever. But the little creatures did not have many happy days with their foster parents for they would not give them either nuts or sugar or honeyflowers. However they had both found good friends in the cockerel and the hen from the first hour of their entrance into the house of their foster parents. The cockerel secretly carried many a nut to Nutcracker and people often saw them walking together on the trough by the pump in the yard. And the hen very often flew over the garden fence to get flowers for Dolly and was often punished for it, for whenever the woman saw her there, she drove her away with stones and declared by all that was good and great she would make the garden fence higher so that the hens could not fly over into the garden.

The nut pedlar and his wife often talked over with each other what should be done with the children. Nutcracker would eat nothing but nuts and they were not designed for him but to be sold, and besides the trade was much less profitable since the rogue had been in the house. And then he did not improve at all and learned nothing, so that nothing could be made of the plan of his studying and becoming a learned man. In short the foster parents had to confess that their adopted children were more trouble than pleasure to them and they were really sorry that they had taken the nut and the egg. But Nutcracker who was more and more discontented in the house began to think how he could get secretly away. He was of the opinion that the forest would be the pleasantest place to live in especially on account of the nuts which were to be found there. But for his little legs the way thither was too long and he could not go so far. Then he went to his friend the cockerel and talked the plan over with him. The cockerel said he would take him on his back the next morning and fly with him to the forest. Nutcracker was delighted with this plan and went to tell it to Sugardolly. At first she was alarmed at it for she was afraid of being left alone and thought the journey was dangerous. But when Nutcracker explained to her that he was only going to look after a better place

for them both to live in, and would soon come back for her, she consented that he should go. The cockerel and the hen also had a long cackling and clucking about it with each other in a corner of the yard, and at last all four were agreed that the cockerel and Nutcracker should go and explore and then come for Dolly and the hen and take them to some beautiful place where they could all live happily together. The next morning early the cockerel crowed and clapped his wings in anticipation of the journey, and Nutcracker leaped upon his back, took hold of his many colored ruff and they flew out of the window and over the wall towards the green forest.



THIRD CHAPTER.

HOW SUGARDOLLY GRIEVES FOR NUTCRACKER AND HOW SHE GOES AFTER HIM AND SEEKS FOR HIM, BUT DOES NOT FIND HIM.

hen the fruit pedlar and his wife got up they wondered that all was so still in the house. The cockerel did not crow, the hen did not cackle, Sugardolly was not singing nor dancing, but sat still in a corner, and Nutcracker was nowhere to be seen. They called him and hunted for him but in vain. They looked under the stairs where the hen had her nest; she was sitting in the farthest corner with her head under her wing. Then they thought Nutcracker must have met with some misfortune for he was always climbing about; they were glad to be rid of the little rascal who had caused them so much trouble. But they were very sorry that the handsome mottled cockerel was gone also.

After that Sugardolly was stiller and sadder every day for she missed Nutcracker, who had been her constant companion and when day after day passed away without his return she did not know what to make of his

long absence. She sought more and more the company of the white hen who was also unhappy at the absence of the cockerel and they very often asked each other whether Nutcracker and the cockerel would ever come back. The hen frequently took long walks out of the yard into the street, in the hope that she might either see or hear something of the cockerel, but it was always in vain. Once she came back very quickly and very happy from such a walk having in her bill a beautiful changeable feather which she brought to Sugardolly. She told her that she had found it on the way to the forest and that she knew it was a feather out of the cockerel's ruff. «Now I am sure,» said the hen, «that they have both flown to the forest and if you say so, Dolly, I will take you in the morning on my back and you shall fly there with me and we will look for the cockerel and little Nutcracker.» Dolly agreed to this for since Nutcracker had been away, she had not been happy with her foster parents. They were more unkind to her because in her sorrow for her lost companion she did not want to dance and sing any more and so amused them no longer. And now she hoped that she might find Nutcracker in the forest and with him lead a merry life.

The next morning early she mounted on the back of the good natured hen and flew with her to the forest.

And when the fruit dealer and his wife got up and went to their work and the wife went to feed the fowls she could not see the white hen. Then she called Sugardolly to ask her about the hen for she had noticed that the two were good friends, but Dolly was nowhere to be found. At this the man and his wife rejoiced to be rid of the children who always reminded them of the wrong they had done. But they were very sorry indeed that the white hen was gone which laid so many eggs.

After a short and happy journey the hen and Sugardolly alighted in the forest and as soon as Dolly had dismounted she began her search for the cockerel and Nutcracker. The hen cackled as loud as she could and was lucky enough to be immediately heard for the cockerel answered with a shrill Cock-a-doodle-doo and at once



came running in great joy out of the shades of the forest. Sugardolly asked him about Nutcracker, but he could not tell anything about him except that he had climbed upon a nut tree soon after their arrival in the forest. Since then he had not seen him and had hoped from day to day to see him, but hitherto in vain.

Then Sugardolly took a sorrowful leave of the cockerel and the hen who seemed to be well contented with the beautiful open wood and went alone to try and find Nutcracker. She looked on all the trees, she peeped into the bushes, she called him by name, but found no trace of him.

Even at night she did not rest, but with a glowworm in each hand as a torch she looked in the thickets and the tall grass, but he was not to be found. When it was day she saw the bees flying from one wild flower to another, sucking the honey and loading themselves with wax. Then she sat down under the flowers, for she was tired out, and took a breakfast of honey. And the bees flew about her and hummed to her:

«Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz,
Over grasses and flowers
Nutcracker has gone
Through the wood's green bowers.»

Dolly was glad to hear this and thought that now she should get track of the wanderer. And she spoke to the flying birds and said:

«Little birdies, playing
O'er the forest swaying,
O'er the mountains green;
Nutcacker have you seen?»

Then the birds set up such a singing and twittering and one cried louder than another and for a long time Dolly did not understand at all what it was that they meant to say. One had seen him on this tree and the other on that. A lark that was trilling high over the forest said that she had seen him one morning in the meadow but did not know anything more of him. At last a merry finch came along and said in haste:

«Pick, Pick, Pick, Pick,
Be quick, be quick!
Yonder Nutcracker springs,
And rustles and rushes,
Through the green bushes,
Be quick, be quick,
Pick, Pick, Pick, Pick!»

Just then Sugardolly actually heard a rustling and crackling in the bushes and ran up to them and in a tone

of joy called «Nutcracker!» However it was not he, but a squirrel cracking nuts and he threw the shells at her. She could not find Nutcracker in the forest and went out into the meadow and spoke to the flowers:

«Little flowers with eyes so blue,
Say, has Nutcracker been with you?»

Then the wind passed over the meadow and shook the flowers and they spoke softly:

«Nutcracker was with us and sought for rest,
With leaves and blossoms we covered his breast.
At daydawn he woke and away he went,
But we know not whither his steps were bent.»

Sugardolly was unhappy when she heard this answer, for she did not know where she should go to look for Nutcracker. But she resolved to go out into the meadow in the hope that she might find out something about him. And as she went farther, and farther she came to the beautiful castle Rosebush, the abode of queen Centifolia. It was all made of green leaves and neatly, airily, and pleasantly built, and the pillars and corners had sharp thorns set close together as a protection against enemies. Dolly saw a great many people going up to the castle and asked a shining little gold bug what was going on there. She was told that it was the feast of roses that

day and that the queen had a great concert in the castle. Dolly sat down opposite to the castle and saw queen Centifolia come out on the balcony and take her seat on a throne of green leaves. She had a beautiful rose colored



silk dress, a crown of roses on her head and a white veil as fine as a spider's web floated around it. Her two children, princess Rosæ and prince Rosered sat beside her on little green chairs in red and green puffed garments and a whole train of court ladies, all in rose colored dresses stood and sat around them. The singers and songstresses arrived one after the other: Mr. Finch and Madam Linnet, Mr. Green Finch and Madam Thrush. Mr. Yellowthrush and Madam Lark, and at last came the famous songstress Madam Nightingale and then there was music in abundance. A shepherd who was pasturing his flock on the meadow drove his sheep nearer to the castle that he might hear something of the concert. And when

the sheep came too near the castle the sharp thorns caught something from their fleeces and then the little wood birds made haste to carry off the bits of wool to their nests in order to make a softer bed for their little ones. And when the singers had finished the insects gathered about the castle for a dance and a great beetle played the bass viol for them.



So the singers and the insects kept up the festivities till it was dark and the queen had the castle splendidly lighted up by a thousand shining glowworms. Then all the singers and songstresses went home and only Madam Nightingale remained to sing the queen and her children to sleep.

Then Sugardolly thought that it was too late to go any farther and went up to the balcony where the queen sat and asked if she could be permitted to spend that night in the castle. Centifolia must have been very tired for she only nodded sleepily and Dolly went into the green castle hall and lay down and was soon fast asleep with fatigue after her long wanderings. The next morning the sun awoke her and she left castle Rosebush to continue her journey. She looked up to the balcony of the queen but she was still sitting there sleeping and nodding on her green throne and princess Rosa and Prince Rosered had laid their little heads on her lap and all three had slept there through the beautiful summer night. And Madam Spinaway an old ugly negress in the service of the queen had thrown a great white veil over all three and it was splendidly adorned with pearls and jewels in which the rising sun flashed and sparkled.

Dolly went to a brook that flowed merrily over the colored stones and stooped down to take up some water

to wash the sleep out of her eyes. Then she heard the brook softly murmuring:

«From the mountain I come
Where the dwarfs have their home,
In the cave whence I spring
Nutcacker is king,
To him quickly flee
And Queen thou shalt be.»

At this Dolly knew what she had to do and that she had only to follow the brook to find the cavern and Nutcracker. She started immediately on the journey but the brook made many windings and several days passed away before she reached the end of her wanderings. At last one evening she came to a high, high mountain from which the brook leaped out merrily. «Now,» thought Dolly, «the cavern where the dwarfs live and where Nutcracker is king must be up yonder,» but though she looked and looked, the mountain was steep and no path led up its side. She called Nutcracker again and again but her voice was drowned by the plashing of the brook and in sadness she sat down at the foot of the mountain and from extreme weariness went to sleep.

FOURTH CHAPTER.

HOW SUGARDOLLY BECOMES QUEEN OF THE DWARFS.

Sugardolly must have slept very soundly for when she awoke the next morning she saw to her great astonishment that she was not lying in the grass at the foot of the mountain, but on a rich and handsome carpet in the cave of the dwarfs where the little creatures had carried her. When she had called Nutcracker the evening before a little dwarf who was sitting under a water plant beside the brook fishing for pearls had heard her. As soon as she had gone to sleep he went nearer to her and was delighted to find a little being no bigger than himself. He called the rest of the dwarfs to see her and after they had admired her appearance they took her up carefully and carried her softly up the mountain into the cavern. And now they all danced around Dolly and sung:

Sugardolly slight and fair
Thee, their queen the dwarfs declare:
A golden sceptre shalt thou bear,
A golden crown shall deck thy hair;

The dwarfs will ever love thee,
Nor e'er to sorrow move thee.
Thou Dolly to the dwarfs be kind
And keep a fresh and happy mind;
We'll cause thee no displeasure
Thou art our joy and treasure.
Sugardolly slight and fair
Thee, their queen the dwarfs declare.



Then one of the dwarfs came and brought her a golden sceptre and a golden crown on a beautiful cushion

and after she was adorned with them the dwarfs led her to a golden throne and all kneeled before her and promised to obey her in every thing.

As soon as the ceremony was over, Sugardolly asked after king Nutcracker, but the dwarfs made such angry faces as she did so and such wild gestures that Dolly was almost afraid of them. Then they told her how they had found Nutcracker asleep and had brought him into their cave; how they had hoped that he would be a good king to them and how they had crowned him and shown him a great deal of love. But he went and ate up all the nuts that they had collected with much labor for the winter, and when they gave him anything except nuts to eat he got very angry and would bite at them with his great mouth and try to cut them with his sword. Finally one day he broke out one of his teeth biting at a golden nut, which their goldsmith had expended his skill in making, and which Nutcracker thought was eatable. This put him in a great rage so that he took a whole basket full of golden nuts and threw them into the brook. This was more than they could bear, for gold is their favorite metal and it costs them great pains to get it out of the earth, and nobody is allowed to take it away from them without being punished. Accordingly they got out of all patience

at this loss and fell upon Nutcracker with great knotted handkerchiefs and drove him out of the cavern and threa-



tened him with worse treatment if he should ever show himself there again.

From this narrative Sugardolly perceived that Nutcracker was still as immoderate in nut eating and just as surly and passionate as he had been at the fruit pedlar's. But as he had always been good and kind to her she had become greatly attached to him and was now quite sorry because she could not find him again. Indeed she entirely forgot her crown and throne and that she was a queen and began to weep aloud, which is not a very proper thing for a queen to do. The dwarfs were much astonished and alarmed at her unhappiness and humbly begged her pardon if they had hurt her feelings. They said they

would try to serve her in every way if she would only stay with them and be a good queen to them. Finally Dolly dried her tears and was contented. She saw that it would hardly be possible for her to find Nutcracker, and being weary with her long journeying and searching she thought it would be better to stay with the good natured dwarfs than to go straying about in uncertainty any longer. So she promised the dwarfs to stay with them and be their queen and they were glad to hear it and went each one about his business. Most of them crept into fissures of the earth to get out gold, silver, and precious stones, but others had work to do in various parts of the cavern. There was a baker who knew how to make from the honey that he took from the bees of the forest nice things such as Sugardolly liked to eat; and a weaver wove silken garments and worked gold and silver into them. The goldsmith prepared splendid vessels and furniture such as the cavern was adorned with, and made them more beautiful with glittering stones. So the dwarfs worked industriously and never ceased to find gold, for what they did not dig out themselves the brook that sprang from the bottom of the cave brought up to them; only they had to take some pains in getting it out of the water. Still they could not hinder the brook from carrying a good many of the bits of gold down the rocks far

away to the dwellings of men. And there the men greedily collected the bits of gold out of the sands of the brook and whenever they found a great piece, such as one of the golden nuts that Nutcracker threw into the brook they were astonished and thought a great deal as to the way in which the gold got into the brook. One guessed it was this, another that, but they never hit the truth for they knew nothing of the dwarfs and of Nutcracker. Some of the little people always remained with the queen to keep her company and to wait upon her and they entertained her with all sorts of tales and histories. And at evening the dwarfs all gathered quietly about the feet of the queen, who sang a great many songs to them. And Sugardolly found the life among the dwarfs very nice and pleasant and the dwarfs were delighted with their beautiful queen who could sing such pretty songs.

FIFTH CHAPTER.

HOW NUTCRACKER, THE BANISHED KING OF THE DWARFS, WANDERED ABOUT THE FOREST AND FELL INTO GREAT STRAIGHTS, BUT AT LAST WAS DELIVERED OUT OF THEM.

While Sugardolly was thus peacefully ruling over the dwarfs, Nutcracker climbed from one tree to another and cracked and ate all the nuts he could find. As long as the Summer lasted and plenty of nuts hung upon the trees, he had a fine time of it and was happy that he was no longer king, for he could go where he pleased and crack as many nuts as he desired. But when the nuts grew scarcer and scarcer he often had to battle with the squirrels, for they wanted to keep all the nuts for themselves. One day Nutcracker had found the nest of a squirrel where the squirrel had laid up his winter stock of nuts. He was eating away at them with high satisfaction when the owner came home and fell upon him tooth and nail. He defended himself with all his might



and as he had sharp teeth as well as the squirrel, they bit each other very smartly, till at last Nutcracker succeeded in choking the squirrel to death. Then he took off the squirrel's skin and put it on himself as a little mantle, for it began to be cold and he was sometimes near freezing.

After this Nutcracker met with hard times. The squirrels had carried all the nuts to their nests and he did not dare to show himself because a gossiping blue

jay had seen him choke the squirrel and had told the story all over the forest. Wherever the squirrels saw him they fell upon him and bit him and scratched him out of revenge and because it vexed them to see him with the squirrel's skin on. In this extremity he often thought of the time when he was king of the dwarfs and how happy he might be there now if he had been more moderate and kind to his subjects. He thought too quite often of Sugardolly and would gladly have been with her in the house of the fruit dealer. But it was a long way there and he did not know the road and his true friend the cockerel who could have carried him back he had lost in the forest, as soon as they had arrived. So there was no help for it, he must stay where he was.

One day Nutcracker was sitting in low spirits under a tree from which the cold autumn wind had shaken the last leaves. He had wrapped the squirrel's skin close around him and had crawled under the fallen leaves so as to be less exposed to the cold. Suddenly he heard a rustling among the bare bushes and the dry leaves, and a big hound leaped at him barking loudly. Nutcracker was not idle. He leaped, up drew his sword and laid about him with great fury. The dog which had been deceived by the skin and thought Nutcracker was a squirrel was confounded and only stood before him and barked.

This attracted the huntsman to whom the dog belonged and he was astonished at the little creature and did not know what to think about him. But he whistled his dog away and made him be quiet and then went up to the little fellow who was still threatening the dog with his sword, and at last asked him who he was. «A king!» said Nutcracker with lowering aspect. «A king?» rejoined the huntsman in astonishment, you don't say so! — «Where is your kingdom?» At this Nutcracker put on a wrathful face, but said nothing, and though the huntsman asked him many other questions not a word would he say in reply. The man was sorry for the little fellow, who, it was plain to see, was very cold, and he thought perhaps that he might serve as a playmate for the children of his master, whose castle was not a great way from the forest. And so at last he asked him if he would go with him for he would freeze there in the wood. The little fellow gave a surly nod by way of assent and started to follow the huntsman, but he could not get on fast enough and sunk almost to his ears in the fallen leaves. Then the huntsman stooped down and took the little fellow on his arm and went with him rapidly through the forest. But they had not gone far before a loud Cock-a-doodle-doo saluted them from the branch of a tree. At this Nutcracker who had been sitting still looked and recognized



his friend the cockerel and made the queerest faces. Then the huntsman thinking that perhaps they belonged together at last enticed the cockerel which had flown after them from tree to tree, so that he came down to the ground and sat on the huntsman's arm beside Nutcracker. The cockerel began to crow and chatter and the huntsman who understood something of the language of animals because he was always hunting for them in the woods, heard from him the story of the white hen that

the fox had carried off, and how hungry he was because for a long time he had found nothing to eat. But Nutcracker spoke in all sorts of snarling tones and the huntsman could not understand him and by and by the strange pair arrived in the yard of the castle. The cockerel jumped down clapped his wings, set up a merry Cock-a-doodle doo and went in among the hens for they were just having a dinner of barley corns. The hens were frightened at first and ran away, but they soon saw that it was only a noble looking cockerel and came cackling back again and made acquaintance with him.

While the cockerel was enjoying himself with the barleycorns among the hens the huntsman carried Nutcracker to the lord of the castle, who called his two children, a boy and a girl, to see the little dwarf. The children were delighted with the little fellow and the lord of the castle kept him as their playmate. They carried him into a warm room where he threw off his squirrel's skin and began to amuse them with all sorts of tricks and capers.

SIXTH CHAPTER.

HOW SUGARDOLLY LOSES HER KINGDOM AND WHAT SHE GAINS INSTEAD.

One evening as Sugardolly sat in the cavern and the dwarfs were coming forth out of all the fissures and holes and corners to take their places around the queen and give an account of their day's work, she counted her subjects and one little dwarf was missing. At last the little fellow came along panting with a great bundle of moss upon his back and when the queen asked him where he had been so long, he said that there was a great castle behind the mountain with a beautiful garden, belonging to a rich lord who had two children, a boy and a girl. He had been gathering moss in the garden hedge and had tied up his bundle, when suddenly the little girl came up to the place with a big cat on her arm. The cat leaped from the child's arm and ran after him: perhaps she thought he was a rat because he was so small and gray and nimble. Then in his terror he ran towards a mole's hole and as the little girl drove away the cat he was lucky enough to reach it and creep in. He staid there a long time, and did not dare to go out till the little girl called

him and told him to come out without being afraid, for the cat was gone and she would help him carry his bundle. And when he came out of the hole she had actually picked up the bundle and she carried it a good piece of the way.

The queen and all the dwarfs were pleased with the little girl and Sugardolly said she would herself soon pay the child a visit to thank her for having saved the life of one of her subjects. At this the dwarfs were alarmed and they represented to the queen the dangers to which she would be exposed on such an expedition and advised her to remain at home and send some of her subjects with presents to the child. But Sugardolly having now lived for some time in the dwarfs' cavern, had a desire to see some other places and persisted in her scheme. Accordingly they determined to attempt the journey the next night, which was the night before the child's birthday. They were to go by night because the dwarfs love the moonlight more than the sunlight and do not like to be seen by men. For that reason they always prosecute their labors in secret places or in the night when men are asleep.

When the next evening came the whole tribe of the dwarfs set out on the journey with the queen in the midst of them, for they loved her and sought to protect her against all danger. All carried gifts for the little girl, pretty



playthings, delicate sweetmeats and rare wood flowers. They climbed noiselessly down the mountain, and going, now by subterranean pathways, and now through low thickets they at last arrived safely in the castle yard. All was dark and still in the castle, for it was near midnight and all the entrances were closed; but as they went around the walls looking, they found an air hole of the cellar open. They made their way through it, and across the cellar, and up the cellar way, and across the great

hall, and up the castle stairs, and through long passages, wide halls and rooms to the bed chamber of the child. She lay peacefully in her bed and perhaps was dreaming of the handsome presents that she expected on her birth day. Sugardolly climbed upon a little footstool and from that upon a chair that stood at the bedside of the child and leaned over the bed to look at the little girl, while the dwarfs formed a ring around the bed and danced and sang softly their songs.

The dwarfs were thus engaged when suddenly the cock crowed in the yard of the castle. This frightened them and they wanted to start for home and entreated the queen not to stay any longer, because the day was breaking. But the crowing of the cock had also roused up a little figure in one corner of the room. This was nobody else than Nutcracker, who knew the dwarfs by the light of the night lamp, and mindful of the ignominious way in which they had expelled him, he drew his sword and went fiercely at them. The queen was terrified and screamed, the dwarfs collected about her so as to protect her and to take her with them, but just then the cock crowed a second time and the dwarfs struck more and more violently with their knotted handkerchiefs and Nutcracker laid about him right and left with increased fury. Sugardolly was motionless with fear as she saw



the battle, and besides she could not stir from the place for the child in her sleep had seized hold of her little dress and held it fast. Then the cock crowed for the third time and the dwarfs had to fly, for they dare not stay in the dwellings of man after the third crow of the cock. They slipped out at a crack of the door but had to leave their beloved queen behind, for she was held fast by the sleeping child and Nutcracker had taken his stand before her and flourished his sword like a madman so that none of the dwarfs dared to come near him. At last all became

quiet again and the child let go of Dolly's dress and turned to sleep on the other side. Dolly got down from the chair and sat with Nutcracker in a corner and each told the other everything that had happened since their flight from the house of their foster parents.



The next morning as the little girl awoke she was exceedingly surprised to see such a little creature sitting beside Nutcracker. She called her little brother and both asked Dolly where she had come from. Dolly told them the whole story and the children could not enough wonder at what they heard. But Dolly was neat and pretty and what she told them was so wonderful and Nutcracker was so merry on account of her arrival that the children were perfectly happy with their new playmate and soon could not do without Nutcracker and Sugardolly.

SEVENTH CHAPTER.

HOW NUTCRACKER AND SUGARDOLLY LIVE AT THE CASTLE AND
WHAT FINALLY BECOMES OF THEM.

THUS after their long separation Nutcracker and Sugardolly were together again and lived happily with the children in the castle. Dolly was especially beloved by them on account of the pretty songs that she used to sing which she had learned in the forest and the meadow from the birds and bees and gold bugs, and on account of the many beautiful things that she could tell of her long wanderings, of castle Rosebush and queen Centifolia and of the cave of the dwarfs and all that was done there. How much the children desired to see all those things and how earnestly they besought Dolly to take them to the dwarfs' cavern! But she did not know how to find the road. It was night when she came to the castle and who could tell what winding ways the dwarfs had carried her so

that they need not be discovered. Nutcracker too was liked pretty well by the children for he amused them with all kinds of queer capers that he cut, and as he was a nimble climber he was very useful to them and got for them many things which they could not reach themselves. He always brought down the hoops that hung on the trees when they were at play, or the balls that were accidentally thrown upon high places, and they thought beforehand with pleasure how in summer Nutcracker would get cherries and pears from the trees. And as they saw that he liked to eat nuts they often gave them to him and told him fine things about Christmas and how he should then have plenty of big ones. They amused themselves already at the thought of how he would have to stretch his big mouth for the big nuts. As yet he had only had hazel nuts and they were not much, but at Christmas what big walnuts! and how they would crack!

The cockerel too became a favorite with the children, for whenever they went into the courtyard with Nutcracker and Sugardolly he crowed lustily to them and when they were playing there he stood near them and shouted his glad Cock-a-doodle-doo; but there was nobody from whose hand the cockerel liked to eat as

well as from Nutcracker's. Thus the children led a right happy life with Nutcracker, Sugardolly and the cockerel; and what with singing and playing and telling stories the time passed rapidly away and they did not once think it could ever be otherwise. Sometimes their godmother the Fairy Honeymouth came to visit them and always brought with her very pretty playthings and fine sweetmeats. The little Fairy always came through a small cupboard in the wall of the room where the children kept their playthings. In the cupboard there was a little hole which the children supposed to be a mouse hole, but as they often put bits of cake there to catch the mouse and they were never even nibbled they came to the conclusion that this must be the way by which the Fairy, their godmother Honeymouth came to see them. From that time they watched carefully in order to see her come. But they never could succeed and their godmother was always in the room and had laid all kinds of pretty things in the little cupboard before the children had taken any notice of it. They would have liked very much to go home with their godmother, but she always disappeared as softly and imperceptibly as she had come. They beat and hammered on the little hole in the little cupboard and broke off some of the plastering and made the hole bigger but it was of no use; they could see nothing but a dark hole.

Finally they besought Nutcracker and Sugardolly just to creep into the hole and see where it led to. The two were ready and willing and set out upon the way. For a long time they had to creep along in a dark passage, till at last it became higher and wider and they groped along by the walls. By and by it became clearer and clearer and finally they came into the green, blooming and splendid garden of the Fairy Honeymouth from which the fruit pedlar and his wife had stolen the nut and the egg. They went around and saw every thing and after a while they came to the golden gate where stood the nut tree and the sugartree. Sugardolly looked at the sweet things with a great desire to have some and Nutcracker was no less eager for the great, fine nuts and he prepared to climb the tree. But the birds of the garden came as they had done before and fluttered their wings and cried: «Don't do it! Don't do it.» So that the little ones ran affrighted back to the entrance of the dark passage. In running Dolly fell upon her nose and would certainly have cried with the pain if sweet, white sugar had not come into her mouth instead of sand. Then they both felt their way along the walls and arrived safely in the little cupboard. The children were sitting before it full of expectation and curiosity and the little travellers had to tell everything they had seen in the Fairy's garden. The children heard

it with astonishment and were of opinion that all could hardly be true, but Dolly was still smacking her lips with the sweet taste of the sugar, and Nutcracker wore so serious a look at everything that Dolly told that at last they doubted no longer. So they entreated their two playmates to go once more to the Fairy's garden, and to find their godmother, Honeymouth and to ask her to come and take them to the garden. Nutcracker and Sugardolly did not need much urging for the nuts and the sweet things attracted them very greatly and they crept immediately into the hole again and arrived the second time in the Fairy's garden. But the Fairy was nowhere to be seen and they went again to the golden gate and to the nut and sugar trees. Dolly was about to break a little piece from the trunk of the sugar tree, but the birds screamed again: «Don't do it! Don't do it!»

Then Dolly asked a blue jay where the Fairy was, and the jay said that the Fairy had gone on a journey and had left the birds to watch the garden and see that nobody took anything. And the birds were enchanted men who had secretly taken something of the fruits and nice things of the garden, and the Fairy had changed them as a punishment and now they had to keep watch over the garden. The jay warned the little ones not to

take anything whatever, for the Fairy would find it out and not suffer them to escape without punishment.

Then they both had to turn about without having accomplished anything, and once more to tell the children who were waiting at the cupboard what they had seen and heard and how their godmother was gone on a journey. Nutcracker had stuck in his hat a gay feather that had fallen from one of the birds in the garden, Sugardolly took off her silken shoes to take out the sand that had got into them as she was walking and strange to tell! it was fine, white sugar. This increased the desire of the children to see the garden and they waited with impatience from day to day for a visit from their godmother, but she did not come.

Meanwhile Nutcracker, and Sugardolly could not cease thinking of the nut and sugar trees in the Fairy's garden, and at last their desire became so great that they resolved to go secretly by night to the garden, when the birds were asleep, and get some of the nuts and sugar things. In fact they set out one night in perfect silence and when they got there they found the garden most splendid to behold by moonlight. Softly they stole to the garden gate, but though the day birds were asleep, there

were bats and owls enough around the trees, watching the fruit. But Nutcracker and Sugardolly paid no attention to them; no matter how much they screamed or what a fluttering they made. Nutcracker drew his sword in fury and anger and defended Dolly against the assaults of the birds till she had broken off as much as she wished from the brown back of the sugar tree. Then he himself climbed up into the nut tree, protecting himself with his teeth and took as many of the big nuts as he could carry. Richly laden the two little thieves ran to the dark passage followed by the screaming birds, but alas! there stood the Fairy in their path. «You have taken my fruit,» she said, «though you were warned by the birds; and now you must suffer punishment. You Nutcracker shall henceforward forever crack nuts, but only for others; you shall never eat any more yourself. And you, Sugardolly shall become what your name signifies, a sugar doll. And so you shall remain until two well behaved, good children shall release you from your enchantment.» So saying she touched them both with her magic wand so that they became dumb, stiff, and lifeless.

The children at the castle were much surprised in the morning at not finding their playmates. Finally they suspected that they might have gone into the passage to

the Fairy's garden and they waited longingly and impatiently for their return. They waited and hoped for many long days, but always in vain. Nor did their godmother come to see them so that they could beset her with enquiries as to the lost ones.

But at last Christmas arrived and the children desired nothing more earnestly than that Nutcracker and Sugardolly might be present at the festival. And when at evening the two sat together in the dark, silent and trembling with secret expectation, suddenly the door of the little cupboard sprung open and a bright light beamed upon the astonished children. The old playthings were gone and on a Christmas tree hung thick with burning candles, there were the most beautiful new ones. Prominent among them they saw Nutcracker's spiteful and yet good natured face; and Sugardolly's pretty figure was by his side. The children shouted for joy and hastened to them and asked them where they had been so long and how they had been. But, O sorrow! they got no answer for both were stiff and dead. They tried to call Nutcracker back to life with the most beautiful, great nuts, but in vain. He cracked them indeed, but the power of swallowing was gone and the kernels fell from his open mouth. The children looked sorrowfully at their darlings. «See,» said

the Fairy, «they are dead because they took secretly what was forbidden them, yet it is in your power to restore them to life. All that you have to do is to be perfectly well behaved and obedient for a whole year in succession.» At this the children were glad again and resolved earnestly that they would be good and obedient, but as yet they have never succeeded in keeping their resolution for a year together.

From that time to the present day Nutcracker and Sugardolly are regularly given to the children on Christmas eve among the splendors of the Christmas tree. And a great many Nutcrackers have been made out of wood and Sugardollies out of sugar so that nobody can any longer tell which is the true Sugardolly or the genuine Nutcracker. This is truly unfortunate for the children always think that they have not the right ones and do not take pains to be good and obedient and thus Nutcracker and Sugardolly are still waiting for their release.

But what has become of the cockerel? Well, when Dolly and Nutcracker staid away and did not come into the court yard anymore, he flew upon the spire of the tower to look after them. There he stands to this day and turns with the wind and looks in all directions, but his

joyous cock - a - doodle - doo he has forgotten. Since then the people have called him the weather cock for when it storms fiercely out of doors and snow and rain beat against the window, the weather cock utters a shrill scream and the children crowd shivering about the warm fire and repeat the wonderful stories of the dwarfs and the Fairy's garden which Nutcracker and Sugardolly told them.



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